

TEHRAN (AFP) — A special European Union (EU) envoy held talks here on Saturday with Iranian foreign ministry officials aimed at ending the political crisis between the Islamic republic and the EU, the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported. The envoy, identified only as "Mertz," discussed "various aspects" of relations between the two sides with foreign ministry director general for western Europe, Ali Ahani. They also reviewed a possible meeting between Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi and his European counterparts on the sidelines of a U.N. General Assembly meeting in New York next month, IRNA said, describing the envoy's visit to Iran as "unexpected." Quoting an "informed source," IRNA said such a meeting could only take place if "a clear agenda was agreed upon" in Tehran.

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King leaves for Cairo today for summit with Mubarak, Arafat

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein is scheduled to travel to Cairo today for talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on ways to save the peace process, which has received serious blows in the last few days, with Thursday's triple suicide bombing in Jerusalem and Friday's Israeli operation in Lebanon.

The trilateral summit comes as "a continuation of the process of coordination and consultation among Arab leaders" ahead of U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's upcoming tour in the region to reactivate the peace process, Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi said.

Speaking to reporters after a regular cabinet session, the minister described the region's present situation as "very serious" and said the fact that Ms. Albright's tour, scheduled to start on Sept. 9, has not been cancelled after the latest wave of violence was "an indication of the U.S. determination to play its role as a partner to make the peace process work."

The suicide attack on a busy shopping mall killed seven people including the bombers and wounded 192, while the failed military operation in Lebanon resulted in the death of two Lebanese civilians and 11 Israeli soldiers.

The Israelis have been saying that the Jerusalem bombing has narrowed the agenda of Ms. Albright's visit to security matters and significantly reduced chances that the long-awaited American initiative would bear fruit on the political level.

In an interview published in an Israeli English daily Friday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was quoted as saying that the main task of Ms. Albright's visit will be to convince Palestinians to "fight terrorism and dismantle the terrorist infrastructure, commitments that have not been fulfilled so far."

Israeli reports also quoted Israeli President Ezer Weizman as asking Mr. Mubarak, in a telephone conversation after the Jerusalem bombing Thursday, to "use his influence on Mr. Arafat," stressing that the entire peace process was at stake.

Mr. Weizman reportedly said that "Mr. Arafat has to be in control of Hamas and I hope that the other sides taking part in the peace process, such as Mr. Mubarak and King Hussein, will use their influence on him."

The Palestinians, on the other hand, insist that Ms. Albright's visit will touch on political issues and will bring concrete proposals to reactivate peace negotiations.

Mr. Arafat's advisor Nabil Abu Rudeineh was quoted by international news agencies Friday as saying that Mr. Arafat decided to travel to Egypt after "an important call from U.S. President Bill Clinton who expressed his deep interest in pursuing the peace process and asked the Palestinians to help make the U.S. secretary's visit to the region successful."

The Cairo summit follows intense diplomatic efforts exerted by Egypt over the last two months "with Jordan's full backing," Dr. Mutawi said.

Mr. Mubarak's advisor Osama Al Baz has been shuttling between Cairo and Tel Aviv in a bid to revive the fragile peace

(Continued on page 12)

PNA blames Israeli extremists for bombings

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) accused right-wing Israeli extremists Saturday of involvement in the Jerusalem suicide bombing as President Yasser Arafat prepared to meet Arab leaders on the crisis-ridden peace process.

"The Palestinian leadership confirms that the terrorist operation against Israeli civilians in Jerusalem was not a Palestinian attack," said a statement issued following a late night meeting of Mr. Arafat's cabinet a day after three suicide bombers killed four Israelis on a Jerusalem pedestrian mall.

"We have evidence and information from the Israelis which shows that those behind this attack came from abroad and got help from the Israeli radical groups which assassinated Rabin," it said, referring to former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin who was slain in November 1995 by a Jewish extremist.

The statement accused Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government of "trying to hide information and details about who was behind this terrorist operation, who carried it out and who helped them."

Thursday's suicide bombing struck a severe blow to

the crumbling peace process only days before U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright is to make her first tour of the Middle East.

In preparation for the visit, Mr. Arafat is to hold talks in Cairo with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and His Majesty King Hussein Sunday, officials said.

The summit's aim is to "examine the most efficient ways of saving the peace process and organising maximum coordination" ahead of Ms. Albright's tour, an Egyptian official said.

"His Majesty King Hussein will spare no effort to save the peace process," a senior Royal Court official said.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said Friday the summit would be complemented by contacts on "Arab and international levels to salvage the peace process which is facing huge challenges imposed by Israel."

Mr. Musa singled out "Israeli measures which are contrary to the peace accords and violence targeting civilians."

Immediately after Thursday's blasts, Israel reimposed a blockade on the Palestinian territories

which had first been slapped on the area after the Jerusalem bombing in July.

Mr. Arafat's senior aide, Tayeb Abdul Rahim Friday implicitly accused Syria and Iran of involvement in both attacks.

But Mr. Netanyahu has laid the blame squarely on the PNA even though police have not identified the bombers.

"These attacks could not have been organised without the involvement of dozens of people to scout out the locations, build the bombs and transport them," he said Friday.

"For this, they need bases and Hamas carried out this attack from inside the Palestinian territories," he said, referring to the largest Palestinian Islamist movement whose military wing, Izzeddine Qassam claimed responsibility for the bombings.

Israeli troops arrested around 10 Palestinian suspects on the West Bank overnight, adding to around 70 detained the previous day, Palestinian sources said.

The Israeli government issued a clear warning Friday that if Mr. Arafat does not arrest large numbers of Islamists and eliminate the infrastructure of Hamas and other armed groups, it

would use its own troops to do so even in PNA areas.

"Israel is going to fight terrorism, its bases and its infrastructure to ensure the security of its citizens, unilaterally and without coordination with the PNA," Cabinet Secretary Danny Naveh said.

No such action was expected, however, before Ms. Albright's arrival in the region Wednesday.

Mr. Netanyahu also said Israel would hand over no new territory to the PNA despite its commitment under signed peace agreements until Mr. Arafat crushes militant groups.

"It is inconceivable that we hand more territory over to the Palestinians which would only serve as new bases for the terrorists," he said.

The Palestinian statement called on U.S. President Bill Clinton and Ms. Albright "to be aware of Israeli attempts to use security issues as an excuse as Netanyahu has to damage peace process and avoid implementing peace agreements."

The PNA has detained two senior West Bank Hamas leaders and arrested at least seven suspects since Thursday's attack but on Friday Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erakat ruled out mass arrests.

Israel arrests more West Bank Palestinians in bomb probe

HEBRON (AFP) — The Israeli army arrested more than 20 Palestinians in pre-dawn raids around the West Bank Saturday, bringing to around 90 the number of suspects picked up since a triple suicide bombing in Jerusalem, Palestinian sources said.

About 10 suspects were picked up in raids in Hebron and in the villages of Dura and Dahiyat to the south, the sources said.

Another 12 were arrested in villages around Bethlehem, a Palestinian-ruled town where Palestinian police discovered an explosives hideout in July before the two multiple suicide bombings in Jerusalem, sources said.

The previous night Israeli troops rounded up 69 West Bank Palestinians suspected of connection to terrorist activity, the army said.

The army carried out the raids in West Bank villages under its control after three suicide bombers blew themselves up in a downtown Jerusalem outdoor mall Thursday, killing four Israelis and injuring more than 170 others.

Some 200 suspects had already been arrested in the West Bank following the first Jerusalem bombing in July.

The Izzeddine Qassam brigade, Hamas's military wing claimed responsibility for both attacks.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insisted Friday that the bombers were guided by Hamas and benefited from support from groups operating in Palestinian-ruled areas.

His government warned Friday that it would send Israeli troops into PNA areas to hunt for militants if

the Palestinian police do not round up the suspects and dismantle their organizations.

Palestinian police have arrested two Hamas leaders from Nablus and Ramallah and detained seven to 10 lower level suspects since Thursday's bombing.

But the PNA has refused to carry out mass arrests of Islamists as demanded by Israel, with apparent U.S. backing, saying no evidence has been presented by Israeli police to warrant such widespread detentions.

Earlier this year, Israeli and Palestinian police dismantled a Hamas cell operating from the town of Tsurif near Hebron that was responsible for killing a dozen Israelis in a series of drive-by shootings and a bombing in a Tel Aviv cafe in March.

49 people massacred in Algeria

ALGIERS (AFP) — Forty-nine civilians have been killed and around 60 wounded in Algiers by suspected militants, hospital sources said Saturday, making it the bloodiest such attack in the capital yet.

Survivors said an armed group of several dozen men descended on the suburb of Beni Messous around 9:00 p.m. Friday, in a very poor neighbourhood known as Sidi Youssef.

Residents who had been gathered in a local square were killed by axe and knife blows, they said.

Several mutilated corpses could be seen strewn on the grounds of the suburb's hospital, an Agence France Presse journalist reported.

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Egypt rejects dialogue with Islamists

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian Interior Minister Hassan Alfi Saturday rejected any dialogue with Islamists and expressed doubt that they are serious about stopping the wave of violence that began in March 1992. "We categorically reject any dialogue with these [Islamist] organisations," General Alfi told reporters during a visit to the Cairo Police Academy. "The role of the security services is to effect law and order and not to open dialogues with militant Islamist groups," he added. He said the Islamists' "initiative was unilateral" and not coordinated with the government. "It's their affair and we aren't concerned," he added. The minister noted that "two terrorist attacks took place in [the southern areas of] Assiut and Minya after the announcement of the initiative" by leaders of the Gamaa.



The Royal Standard-draped coffin of Diana, Princess of Wales, is carried by bearers of Welsh Guards into Westminster Abbey in London for the funeral ceremony Saturday (AFP photo)

Millions attend Diana's funeral

LONDON (AP) — Silencing the royals with their grief, Britain's faithful legions shepherded their "people's princess" toward final rest Saturday in a mass outpouring that united commoner and aristocrat in an ocean of human tears.

So visible in the capital during her life, Princess Diana made her last journey through it before millions of subdued people pressed against police barriers. They wept and wailed, applauded and threw flowers in her path.

Upon her cortege: White lilies, the Royal Standard flag — and a card addressed simply "mummy."

"She was human. She was so human," said Ross McLelland-Taylor, a Londoner.

In a Westminster Abbey funeral extraordinary for its emotion, royalty and celebrities joined representatives of Princess Diana's many causes in the place where kings and queens have been married and buried for 900 years.

Services — including readings by Princess Diana's two sisters and Prime Minister Tony Blair — unfolded solemnly with formality and grace.

Earl Spencer, his voice cracking, made several references to the tabloid media, which he has blamed for his sister's death. But mostly he remembered "a very British girl who transcended nationality."

"Today is our chance to say thank you for the way you brightened our lives, even though God granted you only half a life," Earl Spencer said, his eyes welling with tears.

Outside in Hyde Park, thousands watching the simulcast on giant TV screens stood immediately and applauded.

Police had predicted up to six million people along the 3.5-mile funeral procession route. By late morning, they had put estimates at

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India declares mourning for Mother Teresa

CALCUTTA (AFP) — India declared a period of national mourning Saturday following Mother Teresa's death as hundreds of Calcuttans took to the streets in their own tribute to the city's "Saint of the Gutters."

A government spokesman said Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral would arrive in Calcutta Sunday to pay personal homage to the 87-year-old Nobel laureate, who died Friday evening of a cardiac arrest.

While tributes for the missionary poured in from inside and outside India, hundreds of Hindus, Muslims and Christians braved heavy rains here to pay their final respects.

Police, however, were forced to cordon off Mother House, the Missionaries of Charity headquarters, and

cut short a public viewing of the body as the numbers of mourners swelled close to 1,000.

The Indian government, meanwhile, ordered that the national flag should be flown at half mast in mourning Saturday.

Mother Teresa, awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 for her work among the destitute and dying of Calcutta, is due to be buried within the confines of Mother House on Sept. 13.

Her death has prompted widespread tributes across the world from such key figures as the Pope and U.S. President Bill Clinton.

India's politicians and religious leaders also lauded the Roman Catholic nun, who founded her order in Calcutta in 1950 before

(Continued on page 12)

Premier wants Mother Theresa buried in Albania

TIRANA (AFP) — Albanian Prime Minister Fatos Nano Saturday expressed the hope that Mother Teresa, who was of ethnic Albanian origin, would be buried in Albania. "We do not yet know her wishes, but as Albania's prime minister, I feel compelled to express the hope that Mother Teresa should be buried in our motherland, convinced that this is the desire of the Albanian people," Mr. Nano said in a television statement.

Mother Teresa, whose real name was Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu, was born on Aug. 27, 1910 in Skopje, Macedonia, to Albanian parents.

"I wish to assure all Albanians and all those whom she helped, that the Albanian state will honour her as she deserves," Mr. Nano continued.

Following the death Friday in Calcutta of Mother Teresa at the age of 87, Albanian President Rexhep Meidani declared that her death had saddened all Albanians.

"Mother Teresa was a great citizen of the world, whose length and breadth she travelled in the service of the poor and all those who needed her touching attention," the president said in a statement. She visited Albania on three occasions. The last time was in September 1994 when the country was gripped by a cholera epidemic.

Lebanon protests to truce committee after Israeli raid

BEIRUT (AFP) — Lebanon said Saturday it lodged a complaint with an international truce monitoring committee over the death of a civilian woman during a disastrous Israeli commando raid into south Lebanon.

Beirut considers Israel "responsible" for the death of Palestinian refugee Samira Asmar who was caught in the fighting between Lebanese guerril-

las and Israeli troops in south Lebanon early Friday, a Lebanese official said.

Five Lebanese civilians were also wounded during bomb explosions and clashes that erupted after the bungled Israeli raid deep into Lebanese territory, which left 12 elite Israeli commandos dead and four injured.

Two Lebanese soldiers were also wounded, along with three members of

Hizbollah and four from Amal.

Lebanon lodged the complaint with the five-nation committee set up to monitor an April 1996 ceasefire in south Lebanon.

The ceasefire, which ended Israel's 17-day Grapes of Wrath offensive in Lebanon, bans the targeting of civilians or the launching of attacks from civilian areas.

In Cairo, meanwhile,

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa questioned why Israel continued to occupy a buffer zone in south Lebanon, following the death of the 12 Israeli commandos.

"We are following the situation in Lebanon, but the question which must be asked is: 'Why do the Israelis stay in south Lebanon?'" Mr. Musa said to reporters.

Militants reportedly slaughter three family members for collaboration

MINYA, Egypt (AFP) — Militants shot dead three family members suspected of collaborating with police and then tried to behead them with an axe, police said Saturday.

Two members of the Gamaa Islamiyah, the main armed Islamist group in Egypt, opened fire on the men in the village of Al Rudha in the Mallawi region, 300 kilometres

south of Cairo, police said. The militants then tried to decapitate their victims, all farm workers, with an axe while the eight-year-old son of one of the men looked on in horror, they added.

Samir Thabet Sadeq Henes, his brother Malik and another relative Zakaria Kamal Henes were accused of providing police with information

which led to the death of a Gamaa military chief in February.

Ahmad Ali Sayed, 27, had been sought by police accused of involvement in several attacks which caused the death of nine people, including seven police, between 1994 and 1996.

The three men had fled the village after Sayed's death and only recently

returned, police said.

On Friday, a policeman was injured when two militants fired on an armoured car in the village of Atka, also in the Mallawi region, police said.

Saturday's deaths bring to 1,229 the number of people killed since the launch of a violent anti-government campaign by Islamists in March 1992.



PALESTINIAN-GERMAN TALKS: German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel (right) meets with Nabeel Sha'ath, Palestinian minister for international cooperation, on Saturday in Hamburg. Their talks were focused on the Middle East peace process (AFP photo)

Kuwaiti press blames Israeli prime minister for undermining peace

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — The Kuwaiti press Saturday slammed the Israeli government for its extremist policies that are undermining the peace process after Israeli commandos were killed in a failed raid in south Lebanon.

The daily Al Qabas said Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's policies are aimed at "bringing down all previous agreements and international resolutions" referring to Israel's latest military operation in Lebanon.

Twelve elite Israeli commandos were killed Friday after they were ambushed while trying to raid guerrilla bases deep inside southern Lebanon.

"Netanyahu, who by adopting the slogans of extremist Jews calling for expansion, settlements and opposition to regional peace... should therefore be

beld to account for the terrorist attacks and military adventurism in south Lebanon," the Arab Times said.

"And if there is a camp for the enemies of peace, Netanyahu surely must be a leading light there," said the English language newspaper in an editorial also carried in the Arabic sister paper Al Seyassah.

"It is no longer acceptable that these fanatics should be allowed to influence the peace process and impose their will on U.S. policy," the paper added.

But the daily Al Rai Al Aam said Arabs must learn to live with the fact that Israel will always receive special treatment by Washington because of the strength of the Jewish lobby in the U.S.

"We must... turn from our negative, old ideas concentra-

solidarity to practical, organised, precise action. The rights of the Arabs will never be returned by division and isolation," the newspaper said.

Israel faces 'formidable' battle with Palestinians — Iran Radin

Meanwhile, Iran warned Israel Saturday that it was in for a "formidable battle" with Palestinians if it continues to occupy the Palestinian territories.

"The Palestinian nation, understanding the true aims of the Zionist regime, has broadened and intensified its struggle to an unprecedented scale," Iran Radin said in the wake of Thursday's triple suicide bombing in Jerusalem which left four Israelis dead.

"This has roots in the inefficiency of conciliatory talks for saving the Pales-

tinian nation and extremism of Israeli leaders," it said.

"This struggle is a reminder that it cannot hold on to the territories by giving the run-around to the Palestinian Authority, but that they face a formidable battle with the Palestinian nation," the radio added.

Tayeb Abdul Rahim, a senior aide to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, on Friday implicitly accused Syria and Iran of involvement in the attack.

Iran, calling for Israel's destruction, is staunchly opposed to the Arab-Israeli peace process.

The latest suicide bombing struck a severe blow to the crumbling Middle East peace process only days before U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's first tour of the Middle East.

NEWS IN BRIEF

6 Iraqi 'pimps' sentenced to death

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Six Iraqis have been condemned to death for running a prostitution and alcohol smuggling racket for Saudi Arabians, the official newspaper Al Jumhuriyah reported Saturday. The five men and one woman were sentenced in July to death by hanging by a special interior ministry court, the newspaper said, without specifying if they had been executed. They were found guilty of having "recruited girls and operated a prostitution and alcohol trafficking network for Saudi Arabians," the paper said. Diplomatic relations between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, which share a long common border, were broken soon after the 1991 Gulf war.

2 Pakistanis beheaded in S. Arabia

RIYADH (AFP) — Two Pakistanis, one of them a neophiliac, were decapitated Saturday in the Mecca area of western Saudi Arabia for murder, the interior ministry said. Mohammed Riyadh Barkudar and Mohammed Sharif Ahmedin stabbed dead another Pakistani, Mohammed Jawid Mohammed Latif, who was then sexually violated, the ministry said in a statement carried by the Saudi Press Agency. The beheadings bring to 90 the number of executions officially announced in the kingdom since the beginning of the year.

Turkey will not take part in NATO drills

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey on Saturday said it would not take part in NATO's annual military manoeuvres in the Aegean Sea this year, due to be held Sept. 23 to Oct. 9, blaming NATO "concessions" to "Greece." The Turkish foreign ministry justified its decision by saying NATO had made "concessions" to Greece to obtain its participation in this year's manoeuvres, dubbed "Dynamic Mix." Though allies in NATO, Greece and Turkey remain tense neighbours in the Aegean and Greece has balked for several years over the NATO exercises there.

Turkish army kills 52 rebel Kurds

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkish army troops have killed 52 separatist Kurdish rebels in the last three days of fighting in the country's troubled southeast, government officials said Saturday.

Thirty-two rebels from the Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK) were killed in a clash in a mountainous area in Sirmak province bordering northern Iraq, the south-east's regional governorship said in a statement received here.

Security forces killed 20 other PKK members in three other clashes in the provinces of Van, Hakkari and Siirt, it said.

The governorship made no mention of casualties among the security forces.

More than 26,000 people, including rebels, members of the security forces and civilians, have been killed in PKK-related violence in the southeast since 1984 when the group launched its armed campaign for a Kurdish homeland.

In addition to fighting inside Turkish territory, more than 25,000 Turkish troops, backed by tanks and air power, entered neighbouring northern Iraq in May and stayed there for five weeks to wipe out PKK bases.

Foreign 'illegals' play hide-and-seek with Saudi police

DUBAI (AFP) — Bahjit Seif, a Sri Lankan electrical engineer arrested in a sweep against illegal foreign workers, said he would rather tend camels in Saudi Arabia than return home to a pittance of a salary.

"In Sri Lanka, as an electrical engineer, I can't make a third of what I get here just doing odd jobs," he explained on Saudi television after being arrested in the Red Sea port city of Jeddah.

On July 17, Saudi authorities set a three-month deadline for foreigners without work permits to leave the country or face a maximum six months in jail and fines of up to \$26,000.

Those who employ or harbour such "illegals" risk a full year in jail and fines of some \$13,000.

Hundreds of pilgrims to Islam's holiest sites in Mecca who overstayed their welcome to find jobs, including some 500 Sri Lankans and some 200 Filipinos, have given them-

selves up to leave the country under the Saudi amnesty.

But tens of thousands of others are keeping a low profile as the Oct. 16 deadline draws nearer and hide from police in labyrinthine shanty towns set up for the Asian expatriate workforce.

The Mesfat district south of Jeddah, with its shacks and beaten-up cars, is believed to harbour thousands of such fugitives.

The "illegals" based in Mesfat, home to around 20,000 people, continue to make a living by washing cars, working as porters, selling medicinal plants or drug trafficking.

Many of them are protected by landlords who extort between \$300 and \$500 a month per person for cramped and dirty lodgings.

"Some of these illegals are thieves, counterfeiters, alcohol and drug traffickers, as well as killers. Helping them hide only poses a risk for our security," said a

writer to the newspaper Al Iqtisadia.

"Beware of this mob, some of whom carry viruses and could contaminate our children. Don't give them jobs, even if they accept very low wages," warned another reader.

But a third letter to the editor said it would be unfair to charge a \$1,300 deposit to each pilgrim on arrival in Saudi Arabia — as proposed by the paper.

"It may be a small amount for a Saudi, but it's

the equivalent of a whole year or even two years of wages in many Muslim countries," he wrote.

In 1996, Saudi authorities launched a crackdown and expelled 400,000 illegal residents or foreigners who overstayed their Hajj.

The oil-rich Gulf Arab kingdom aims to create new jobs for 650,000 Saudis in its 1995-2000 development plan, gradually replacing foreign workers with its own nationals.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:10 Little Rosey
14:30 The Magic School Bus
15:00 Emergency Express
15:40 Lucky Luke
16:00 American Chart Show
17:00 French Programmes
19:00 News in French
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Fresh Prince of Belair
20:00 Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
20:30 National Geographic
21:10 Renegade
22:00 News in English
22:30 One West Waikiki
23:15 Sisters
23:59 End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:50 Fajr
06:09 (Sunrise) Duha
12:34 Dhahr
16:08 'Asr
18:58 Maghreb
20:17 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweith, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church
Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634590
Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 623366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826

Armenian Catholic Church Tel.

771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel.

775261.

St. Ephraim Church Tel.

771751.

Armenian International Church

Tel. 5516245.

Evangelical Lutheran Church

Tel. 624328.

German-speaking Evangelical

Congregation Tel. 668404.

The Latter-Day Saints Tel.

654932.

Church of Nazareth Tel.

675691.

The Evangelical Local Church

in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking

Latin Catholics Parish Tel.

614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Moderate summer weather conditions will prevail with temperatures around average and winds north-westerly moderate. In Aqaba, it will be hot winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Min/Max temp.

Amman.....19/31

Aqaba.....23/36

Deserts.....19/36

Jordan Valley.....23/37

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 30, Aqaba 25 Humidity
readings: Amman 39 per cent,
Aqaba 36 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Bassam Karadseh.....759200
Dr. Salman Daboubi.....776751
Dr. Ramzi Mazzawi.....894788
Dr. Khalid M'addi.....661144
Firas pharmacy.....661912
Ferdows pharmacy.....778336
Al Asema pharmacy.....737055
Nairoukh pharmacy.....636372
Al Salam pharmacy.....636730
Yacoub pharmacy.....644945
Shmeisani pharmacy.....637660
Najib pharmacy.....847632

IRBID:
Dr. Ghazi Th'ammeh.....250080
Al Quds pharmacy.....(—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Samir Lawzi.....989601
Khalifeh pharmacy.....985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre.....637111

Civil Defence Department.....661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue

.....630341

Civil Defence Emergency.....199

Rescue Police.....192.621111.637777

Fire Brigade.....617101

Blood Bank.....775121

Highway Police.....843402

Traffic Police.....896390

Public Security Dept.....630321

Hotel Complaints.....605800

Price Complaints.....661176

Water & Sewage Complaints.....897467

Amman Municipality Complaints.....787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance).....121

Overseas Calls.....010250

Central Amman Telephone Repairs.....623101

Abdali Tel. Repairs.....661101

Jordan Television.....773111

Radio Jordan.....774111

Water Authority.....680100

J. Electricity Authority.....815615

Electric Power Co.....636381

RJ Flight Information.....08-53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Husseini Medical Centre.....813813/22

Khalidi Maternity.....644281/6

Akileh Maternity.....642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity.....642362

Malhas, J. Amman.....636140

Palestine, Shmeisani.....607071

Shmeisani Hospital.....669131

University Hospital.....845845

Al-Musharraf Hospital.....667227/9

The Islamic, Abdali.....666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali.....664164/6

Italian, Al-Mubajrees.....777101/3

Al-Bashir.....775111/26

Angry, Marka.....891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital.....602240/50

Amal Hospital.....674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery.....865199

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital.....(09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital.....(09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital.....(09)986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital.....(09)990990

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital.....021275555

Greek Catholic Hospital.....(02)272775

Ibn Al Nafess Hospital.....1021247100

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital.....(03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA

INTERNATIONAL

AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 08 (52700)

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

10:05 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)

10:05 Bombay (RJ)

10:20 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

10:20 Larnaca (RJ)

10:25 Beirut (RJ)

10:45 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)

12:15 Jeddah (RJ)

17:05 Amsterdam, Brussels (RJ)

17:40 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

18:05 Paris (RJ)

18:50 London (RJ)

19:05 Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)

19:10 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)

20:40 Rome (RJ)

20:55 Detroit, Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)

00:25 Frankfurt (RJ)

00:45 Beirut (add) (RJ)

01:55 Cairo (RJ)

02:59 Dhahran (add) (RJ)

05:10 Vienna (RJ)

Other Flights

08:10 Doha (add) (GF)

11:00 Al Arish (add) (PF)

12:00 Samsa (FY)

12:00 Jeddah (SV)

13:35 Bahrain (GF)

15:20 Moscow (MS)

21:10 Beirut (ME)

21:35 Cairo (MS)

23:20 Istanbul (TK)

00:59 Cairo (MS)

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CEREMONY FOR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE: His Majesty King Hussein Saturday attended a ceremony held at the Royal Cultural Centre to honour former chairmen and members of the Amman Chamber of Commerce. King Hussein distributed the chamber's shields to the 40 honouree members in appreciation of their services to the Jordanian economy in general and the trade sector in particular. During the ceremony the Chamber's President Haidar Murad presented the King with a token gift, a copy of the Holy Koran ornamented with gems and delivered an address in which he paid tribute to His Majesty and his wise directives that helped Jordan attract investors from throughout the world (Petra photo)

Illiteracy continues to drop, measures taken to ensure continued decline — ministry

AMMAN (J.T.) — The rate of illiteracy among people aged 15 and above dropped from 67.6 per cent in 1961 to 12 per cent in 1997, but efforts are being made to reduce the rate to eight per cent by the year 2000, Director of General Education at the Ministry of Education Mahmoud Masad said Saturday.

In an effort to reduce the illiteracy rate, the ministry has opened 565 literacy and adult education centres, 53 for men and 512 for women, which served a total of 11,475 people in the past year, Dr. Masad said.

In addition, the ministry last year opened several "home classes," whose courses benefited 567 people, according to Dr. Masad, speaking prior to International Literacy Day (ILD), which is observed

on Sept. 8.

The ministry, in conjunction with several non-governmental organisations, is planning a special programme for further improving the efficiency and standards of the teachers at these centres, he continued.

Since the beginning of the new scholastic year, the ministry has re-opened the literacy and adult education centres in the country and provided them with textbooks, as well as stationery, which is given free of charge to the learners as part of the free educational services, according to Dr. Masad.

In a message on the ILD, the Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Federico Mayor said "thanks to the constant and

sustained efforts of all concerned, the tide of worldwide illiteracy is turning: the illiteracy rate, estimated at 45 per cent 50 years ago, has fallen to 23 per cent today.

"However, that average, which is still too high, masks significant disparities. It is in Africa and Asia that illiteracy remains the highest.

"I call upon the governments concerned — all those who, in Hamburg last July, recognised that adult education is 'one of the keys to the 21st century' — to invite them to redouble their efforts to spread adult education and literacy. I call upon non-governmental organisations, volunteer groups, and the private sector to strengthen their work to this end."

Joint Jordanian-Yemeni committee concludes preparatory meetings

SANAA (Petra) — A joint Jordanian-Yemeni preparatory committee concluded its meeting in Sanaa Saturday, prior to a meeting of the higher joint committee in the Yemeni capital today, to be co-chaired by the Jordanian and Yemeni prime ministers.

According to a statement issued after the meeting, the preparatory committee reviewed resolutions taken by the higher committee that was convened in Amman in July 1996 and progress in their implementation.

The preparatory committee recommended a number of protocols, agreements, and memoranda of understanding to the higher committee to sign during its two-day meeting.

The protocols covered the following: technical

cooperation between the investment promotion corporations in the two states, technical cooperation between Yemeni and Jordanian organisations concerned with promoting exports, and cooperation between the two health ministries.

The preparatory committee also submitted recommendations for the following agreements: cooperation in labour-related issues, awqaf and Islamic affairs, tourism, and information, as well as draft agreements on cooperation in judicial fields and on avoiding dual taxation.

On the sidelines of the meetings, private sector businesspeople from Jordan met with their colleagues in Yemen and decided to create a joint committee that would be

entrusted with promoting trade and joint investment projects in the two countries.

The committee is to meet alternately in Sanaa and Amman to follow up on the implementation of the accords.

Yemeni Minister of Industry and Trade Ahmad Soufan, who co-chaired the meeting of the preparatory committee with his Jordanian counterpart Hani Mulki, addressed the closing session by expressing hope that the agreements would further promote trade exchanges.

The preparatory committee's meeting was preceded by a meeting of the joint technical committee, which focused attention on trade, economic, health, cultural, scientific, security, and investment fields.

Cabinet expresses hope for positive results from upcoming Albright visit

AMMAN (Petra) — The Middle East is optimistically awaiting the planned visit by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who reportedly will be carrying new ideas and proposals that could assist the concerned parties to overcome the dangerous obstacles currently facing the peace process, Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi said Saturday.

Despite the recent suicide attacks in west Jerusalem,

there is still hope that Mrs. Albright will bring her ideas, without which the peace process cannot move forward, Dr. Mutawi said after the regular Cabinet session.

"We in Jordan have always been saying that the U.S. should exercise a vital, important, and basic role as a partner in the peace process, and Ms. Albright's visit offers a chance to the U.S. to add credence to this concept," the minister said.

"The U.S. secretary's

ideas could enable the concerned parties to overcome the present painful situation that the region is facing at the moment.

"There can be no alternative to peace, which is an international strategy," he added.

He said the presence of Palestinian and Israeli delegations in Washington to discuss a number of points in the secretary's initiative gives an indication that the upcoming stages will be decisive and head in the

right direction.

Dr. Mutawi said Egypt's efforts are fully backed by Jordan, adding that His Majesty King Hussein recently delegated HRH Crown Prince Hassan to visit Israel and Egypt to pursue efforts in reviving the stalled peace process.

The ministers also discussed a new set of regulations for the Civil Service Commission, but they were not endorsed in the final form because there have been some suggestions for

amendments, he said, expressing hope that the regulations will be ratified soon.

The Cabinet endorsed an agreement on a loan from the World Bank to help carry out the national telecommunications programme.

The Cabinet also authorised the ambassador to Egypt to ratify an agreement reached by the two countries on avoiding dual taxation.

Opening session of conference deals with 'humanity,' 'stereotypes' during information age

By Amy Henderson
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Media professionals from around the world yesterday opened a three-day conference on communication and diplomacy under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, who cautioned against ignoring the human dimension in the new information age.

Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Zeid Rifai, who delivered the opening address on behalf of the Crown Prince, said, "The lure of technology, and the luxury and comfort yielded during the past three decades by what has come to be called the 'information age,' should not prevent us from thinking about the human being himself, and how to sustain resources for his basic, mental and material needs."

"I call upon the governments concerned — all those who, in Hamburg last July, recognised that adult education is 'one of the keys to the 21st century' — to invite them to redouble their efforts to spread adult education and literacy. I call upon non-governmental organisations, volunteer groups, and the private sector to strengthen their work to this end."

The Crown Prince cautioned that the "continuous indulgence to consumerism on the part of the recipients of information, and the voluntary submission to cultural domination will surely result in the recipient's increased dependency on the powers providing this information."

"The inevitable result will be their loss of opportunity to contribute qualitatively

to the future civilisation of mankind," he said.

The conference, organised by the Institute of Diplomacy in conjunction with Yarmouk University's Department of Mass Communication and the Arab-U.S. Association for Communication Educators (AUSACE), is entitled "Communication and Diplomacy: New Horizons in the Information Age." Thirty-five speakers are scheduled to present variations on this theme throughout the three-day meeting.

A professor at Washington State University currently researching the influence of the U.S. media in an extensive list of selected countries shared the Crown Prince's concern of "cultural domination" by rich, developed countries.

Mexico, Brazil, and South Africa, he said.

"Our findings so far were that the predominant image of the United States is bedonistic, materialistic, violent and aggressive, wealthy, stubborn, and self-righteous, as well as being a land full of opportunities and racial prejudice.

"These images are projected [by foreign audiences] to 'real' Americans and their lives," he said.

Another finding was that these images of America and its people are especially appealing to adolescents and in this can be seen an erosion of native values in terms of community structures, he said.

increasing the North-South gap, particularly in terms of information capital.

"Information will be dominated by the U.S.," said Adnan Hayajneh, assistant professor at the Bayt Al Hikma Institute for Political Studies at Al al Bayt University.

Dr. Hayajneh asserted that in the "new world order," basically a bipolar system, international communication has a tendency towards military communication.

"Television cameras follow the U.S. benefits," he said, referring to the tendency of news coverage to concentrate on U.S. economic and military decisions.

During yesterday's afternoon session on press freedoms, Riad Hroub, publisher of Jordan's first weekly newspaper, Shihab, and Jordan's latest daily newspaper, Al Arab Al Yawm, discussed Shihab's experience in challenging the limits to press freedoms since the paper's founding in 1984.

"The major exporters of television and other communication concepts are U.S.-based, although they are not necessarily U.S. companies," Professor Alex Tan said.

Prof. Tan told the conference during the course of his research he studied such issues as: the images of the U.S. that are exported to foreign audiences; the effects on the value systems of foreign consumers; and the projected image of U.S. racial groups and the effect of the American social stereotypes on audiences abroad.

These influences were studied in several countries, including China, Taiwan, Thailand, the Philippines,

Other speakers also voiced concern over the role of major powers, particularly that of the U.S., on international communication in the "new world order," acknowledging a clear concern that the domination of these powers is

Shihab started as a "social" paper that published popular issues, other than politics, said Dr. Hroub, who addressed the afternoon session entitled, "Press and Freedom of Expression."

"We found that people wanted other information," he said. Over the years, Shihab has expanded its jurisdiction into coverage of other fields, including political issues, said Dr. Hroub, but has shown that [the

weekly press] "is a needed and a wanted press."

Jordan's weekly press industry has recently been under fire from both the government and media professionals for being too daring in news coverage, too irresponsible with respect to sensitive issues, and for going against accepted public mores.

Although Dr. Hroub admits that Jordan's weekly news industry has often exceeded accepted limits of decency and news coverage, it has played an important role in expanding democracy.

"We should respect [the weekly newspaper industry]," he said.

At today's sessions, participants from the United Kingdom, Jordan, Tunisia, Morocco, the United States and Egypt will present papers on "Media Challenges in the Next Century" and International Communication in the New World Order."

Among speakers in today's panel of participants is Dr. Tahseen Mansour (Jordan), presenting a paper on "The Future of Public Relations in the Government Sector: Government Directors' Points of View," Ingy Al Sayed (Egypt), presenting a paper on "The Palestinian Question in the Political Documentary Cinema" and Dr. Mohammad Tala (Morocco), presenting a paper on "Hindrances to Research and Communication in the Arab World."

Queen Noor, Prince Hamzeh attend funeral in London

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor and HRH Prince Hamzeh Saturday attended the funeral of the late Princess of Wales at Westminster Abbey in London, according to press release Saturday.

After the funeral, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and his wife held a special luncheon, which was attended by Queen Noor, Prince Hamzah, Ms. Hillary Clinton, Mrs. Bernadette Chirac, Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, British Foreign Minister Robin Cook, and other prominent officials, the statement said.

Mother Theresa's legacy continues in Amman

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Humble and tireless, the Missionaries of Charity in Amman continue their work as Mother Theresa taught them, serving the orphans, the dying, and all those who have nobody to whom to turn.

The twelve "sisters," in their famous blue-trimmed white saris, are the seeds that Mother Theresa, the "Saint of the Ghetto," planted in Jordan in 1970.



To them, the death on Friday of their spiritual guide and founder of their order is not a source of despair, but one more reason to multiply their prayers, "how that Mother Theresa is finally together with Jesus, in peace."

They will have special prayers for Mother Theresa on Wednesday at their headquarters at Gardens Street, said Sister Julie, one of the Missionaries of Charity in Amman.

The Missionaries of Charity, the religious group founded by Mother Theresa, operate two houses in the Amman area for needy people

Joseph parish at the First Circle, who is close to them and met Mother Theresa personally on several occasions, praised their dedication in "serving the poorest without asking for anything in return."

"Their dedication reaches to the extent that during [the Holy Month of] Ramadan they stay up at night to feed and wash the patients who wish to fast," Father Moussa told the Jordan Times.

Father Moussa recalled meeting Mother Theresa six times: Three times on the occasion of her visits to Jordan, "in 1970, in 1974 and 1980, when His Majesty King Hussein conferred upon her Al Istiklal medal," — the Kingdom's highest decoration — in 1982

in Bethlehem, and in 1986 and 1994 in Rome.

"She has always impressed me with her words on Jesus and inner life," he commented.

Mother Theresa, who was born in 1910 to a rich Albanian family, left home to enter a Dublin convent at the age of 18. She founded the order of the Missionaries of Charity in 1950.

Ever since, her organisation has grown to include "more than 5,000 sisters and brothers in 128 countries," according to Father Moussa.

In the Middle East, Mother Theresa's sisters are in Yemen, Palestine, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Sudan, Turkey, Tunisia, and Jordan.

Together with the three ordi-

nary oaths that nuns take — obedience, poverty, and chastity — the Missionaries of Charity also take the oath of "serving the poorest."

Mother Theresa's sisters in Amman are from India, Italy, Slovakia and Ethiopia, but a new Jordanian member might enter the family.

The sisters would not disclose her name, because "we do not think her family approves [her plan to join Mother Theresa's order]," Sister Julie said.

"We know she is in Rome and just completed the first year of her three-year training. 'She will see how our life is like, and then, when she will be sure, she will decide,'" said Sister Julie.

WHAT'S GOING ON

DARAT AL FUNUN SUMMER '97 FESTIVAL

- * Seminar entitled "Visual Analysis About Sculpture" by Dr. Mazen Aslour at 7:00 p.m.
- * Graphics by Rafi Nasiri of Iraq, Ziad Dalloul of Syria, and Najia Mehadji at the South Hall.
- * Paintings by Jordanian artist Mohammad Qailoka at the Middle Hall.
- * Sculpture, drawings, and paintings by Jordanian artist Rajwa Ali.
- * Works by contemporary Arab artists at the Blue House.
- * Paintings by children of Zarqa reflecting on the problem of pollution at the Byzantine church.

PLAY

- * Children's play — "The Treasure" at the Royal Cultural Centre, at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- * Paintings by Palestinian artists entitled "Palestine the Reality and the Dream" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, until Oct. 2 (except Tuesdays).
- * Book exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Sept. 9.
- * Works by Basem Al Mahdi at the Jordan Plastic Art Association Gallery, Jabal Weibdeh, until Sept. 8.
- * Bani Hamida exhibition (rugs, cushions, runners, wall hangings and baskets) at Al Baidar Hall of Kan Zaman, until Sept. 20.

India reports 2 killed in fresh Pakistani firing in Kashmir

SRINAGAR (Agencies) — Two Indians were killed and five injured in fresh artillery fire by Pakistani troops in Kashmir but the situation was not alarming, an Indian Defence Ministry spokesman said Saturday.

The civilian casualties occurred in the latest outbreak of shelling on the line of control in the Himalayan mountain region where at least 15 people have been killed in the last two weeks.

"A four-year-old girl and a 20-year-old lady died in Pakistan shelling Friday evening while five other civilians were injured," defence spokesman, P. Puri-shotam told Reuters in Srinagar, summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir state.

He said the four-year-old girl died in Kern sector in Kupwara district on the boundary line, 87 kilometres north of Srinagar. The 20-year-old woman was killed and five other civilians injured in Tangar sector in the same district, he said.

The spokesman said Pakistani troops were using heavy artillery and mortars

and intermittent firing was still going on.

"It is not alarming, we are reacting to the situation as required," he said. "Fire control is being exercised by our field commanders."

In late August, Indian officials said troops had destroyed about three dozen Pakistani bunkers and killed up to 70 troops across the line of control dividing the highland region.

Pakistani officials and diplomats dismissed the casualty figures. To date, the two sides have confirmed 15 dead.

On Friday, Indian Defence Ministry officials said two Indian soldiers were killed and two wounded in cross-border artillery firing by Pakistani troops.

On Wednesday, India accused Pakistan of provoking fresh cross-border firing which wounded four Indian defence personnel and a civilian.

Diplomats said cross-border firing often picks up at this time of the year when each side tries to bring supplies, often on mule-back, to remote sentry posts along

the mountainous frontier.

Meanwhile Pakistan observed Defence Day Saturday to pay homage to the soldiers killed during a war with neighbouring India on September 6, 1965.

The commemoration began with the recitation in mosques of the Holy Quran and special prayers early morning for the "integrity of the country and for those war heroes."

Pakistan had fought three wars with its neighbour India since the independence of subcontinent 50 years ago on August 14, 1947 from British rule.

President Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari in a message to the armed forces called it a milestone in the history of the nation, saying 32 years ago "brave soldiers, sailors and airmen repelled Indian aggression in a befitting manner."

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said the nation remembers the supreme sacrifices by the "valiant soldiers" of Pakistan in defending the boundaries of the country.

Air Chief Marshall Fa-

rooq Feroz Khan, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, in his message said that Defence Day was a reminder of the sacrifices and heroism of "valiant armed forces in the face of an unprovoked aggression."

Special ceremonies were held at all formations, unit headquarters and installations of armed forces.

Senior Pakistan Army officers visited the graveyards of war heroes in Lahore, Gujrat, Singori, Ladian, Vehari and Rawalpindi and laid floral wreath at their graves.

In the provincial capitals including Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Quetta, and the army headquarters in Rawalpindi, people thronged at the arms and ammunition display which were opened for general public.

The display included anti-tank missiles, ground-to-air missiles, anti-aircraft guns, rocket launchers, heavy artillery guns, communications equipment including radars, a modern low altitude aircraft detector and laser guided missiles.



Mir space station Commander Anatoly Solovyov cuts through the insulation cover of the Spektr module with a special hammer-like instrument during six hours work in outer space Saturday. Solovyov and NASA researcher Michael Foale went on a risky spacewalk trying to repair damage caused by a cargo tug that collided with the Mir station in June (Reuters photo)

Mir crew fail to find puncture in Spektr module during spacewalk

KOROLYOV (AFP) — Cosmonaut Anatoly Solovyov and his NASA colleague Michael Foale returned to the Mir orbital station Saturday after failing to find any hole in the damaged Spektr module during a six-hour spacewalk.

Mission control spokesman Vsevolod Latyshev said Solovyov and Foale were instructed to stop exploring the hull of the stricken Spektr science module because "there is no more time."

They reentered Mir at 11:07 a.m. (0711 GMT), exactly six hours after entering the vacuum of space through a hatch in the Kvant-2 module, wearing cumbersome spacesuits.

During their spacewalk, 400 kilometres above Earth, they managed to reorient two of Spektr's four solar panels, in a bid to boost the 11-year-old space station's diminished power.

They also checked the state of a third panel, damaged in the near-catastrophic June 25 collision with an incoming cargo craft, which depressurised the module.

After the collision, the previous crew had to seal off Spektr from the rest of the craft, abandon numerous experiments and sever the module's power cables, which reduced Mir's power

supply by about 40 per cent.

Solovyov found collision marks on Spektr's thermal insulation panels Saturday and cut away sections of them, hoping to find a hole — believed to be no bigger than a postage stamp — which could have caused the depressurisation.

The third crew member, cosmonaut Pavel Vinogradov, remained inside the main section of Mir, in radio contact with his colleagues and filming the spacewalk through a window.

Foale was also filming the damaged module and Solovyov's work.

Several more spacewalks will probably be needed to repair Spektr, so that it can be reopened for scientific experiments. The next spacewalk will take place on Sept. 20, Mr. Latyshev said.

Mr. Latyshev speculated that the depressurisation may have been caused not by a hole but by a loosening of the joint connecting the damaged solar panel with Spektr.

Foale and Solovyov found a slight movement of the joint on one side during their spacewalk, he said.

During a difficult internal spacewalk on Aug. 22, Vinogradov and Solovyov

had also failed to find any evidence of a puncture in Spektr's hull.

That spacewalk enabled them to reconnect Spektr's severed power cables and restore most of the power that had been lost after the collision.

The collision was the most serious incident to befall the Mir craft, which has been bedevilled by accidents and breakdowns in recent months, prompting U.S. officials to question its viability.

Russian space officials hope that a successful repair job on Spektr will restore the battered prestige of their manned space programme, and enable Mir to remain in service until the first elements of the Alpha international space station are orbiting in 1999.

Mir, launched in 1986, was originally designed to fly for only five years. In addition to the June collision — one of the worst ever accidents in space — the crews on board Mir have had to tackle repeated breakdowns in the oxygen generators, and in February a faulty oxygen canister caught fire, filling the craft with smoke.

They have also had problems with the navigational system and air conditioning on board the craft.

Comoros troops, police battle residents

MORONI (R) — Government troops and riot police battled hundreds of demonstrators in the Comoros capital Saturday as civil unrest spread in the Indian Ocean islands, witnesses said.

Police used tear gas and troops fired in the air in an effort to disperse the rioters, who were demanding the resignation of President Mohammad Taki.

They accuse him of failing to crush a secessionist rebellion on Anjouan Island.

The unrest appeared to be spreading across Moroni, a tiny city of 35,000 people, and the army and police were sending in reinforcements to tackle the most serious domestic challenge to Mr. Taki's rule.

The witnesses said angry youths fought hand-to-hand battles with police and soldiers. They also threw stones, burnt tyres and set up barricades on the streets of Moroni.

"Many are waving placards denouncing Mr. Taki

for his failure to deal with the Anjouan crisis. The clashes are still continuing," said Reuters reporter Mohammad Kemardine.

Friday Mr. Taki's government conceded it had failed to quash a rebellion on Anjouan Island and called on former colonial power France to intervene. But the French government swiftly rebuffed the appeal, saying instead negotiations were the means to end what it described as an "internal problem."

The unrest broke out as Organisation of African Unity (OAU) special envoy to Comoros, Pierre Yere, headed for Anjouan to try to negotiate a ceasefire between secessionists and government troops.

Mr. Yere said Mr. Taki had agreed to withdraw his forces after they suffered a battlefield drubbing at the hands of the secessionists.

The government has blamed "white elements" using sophisticated military hardware for the stiff opposition it faced on Anjouan, in what ap-

peared a reference to mercenaries. It cited as evidence of external aggression a "foreign warship" moored off Anjouan, but gave no details.

Legendary French mercenary Boh Denard was involved in several coups attempts in the Comoros, but there was no suggestion he was involved with either side in the current wrangle.

Anjouan, the second of three islands in the Indian Ocean Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros, declared its secession on Aug. 3 after months of protest and civil unrest. Moheli, the smallest island in the archipelago, followed suit.

Secessionist leaders argue that independence from France in 1975 has brought only poverty and numerous coups and say they want a return to French rule or independence.

Chinese dissident calls for political reform

BEIJING (AFP) — Lin Mu, the former secretary of late Chinese Communist Party Chief Hu Yaobang, has sent an open letter to the upcoming 15th party congress, urging political reforms and a reassessment of the Tiananmen Square massacre.

In the letter, received here Saturday, Mr. Lin also demanded the release of all political prisoners, including Wei Jingsheng, and a strengthening of the rule of law. "These are ideas that I have wanted to voice for a long time," Mr. Lin told AFP by telephone from his home in the northern city of Xian.

"Now with the 15th party congress, which is so important for the government and the Chinese people, the time seems ripe," he added. The congress opens on Sept. 12.

In his letter, Mr. Lin argued political reform in the form of multi-party democracy was a pre-condition for social stability and economic development. "Without political reform, China is like a table where one leg is shorter than the other three," he said, calling for equal power sharing between central and local authorities, and the removal of the army from party control.

Urging the government to address those issues of greatest concern to the Chinese people, Mr. Lin's letter demanded a reassessment of the 1989 pro-democracy movement and its bloody repression by troops on June 4 of the same year. "The authorities should discriminate between justice and injustice, release those in prison and compensate the families of those who died on June 4," he said.

Mr. Lin, 70, first ran foul of the Chinese authorities in 1995, when he was picked up several times by police in Xian for co-authoring petitions demanding the release of political prisoners. In the 1960s, Mr. Lin acted as secretary to Yaobang, who was party chief of Shaanxi province at the time.

Hu became secretary general of the Chinese Communist Party in 1982, but was dismissed five years later for being soft on pro-democracy demonstrators. His death in 1989 sparked the ill-fated pro-democracy movement centred in Tiananmen square.

In his letter to the congress, Mr. Lin warned of the "very serious" social threats currently facing China — notably corruption, widening income disparities, unemployment and a lack of social welfare.

"In order to surmount these obstacles, the only way is to apply democratic principles and to govern by law not force," Mr. Lin said. He also called for a purge of corrupt judicial officials, warning that their abuse of power severely hampered the country's development.

In order to encourage the process of political reform, Mr. Lin argued for revisions to the constitution, suppressing all articles that opposed free speech and promoted media censorship.

Concerns about unemployment and welfare have been growing in intensity as the central government accelerates reforms of its lumbering state sector, forcing cost-cutting and bankruptcy on more and more of the most loss-making enterprises.

As China has yet to develop a modern social security mechanism, no real safety net exists for increasing numbers of laid-off workers — inflating urban resentment and the possibility for unrest.

Under the socialist economic system that prevailed until market reforms began in the early 1980s, workers enjoyed the right to employment and complete, cradle-to-grave welfare guarantees.

Hashimoto cites 'differences' during meetings with Chinese leaders

BEIJING (AFP) — Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto said Saturday that he and Chinese leaders had "differences" on Taiwan's inclusion in U.S.-Japanese security planning during his visit here this week.

"At our summit meeting, I explained the basic position we have, to Premier Li Peng... We exchanged differences of view and in this sense, had a good dialogue," he told a media briefing.

Mr. Hashimoto said during all his meetings — including talks with President Jiang Zemin late Friday — "I believe we were able to deepen China's understanding of the Japanese position."

The Chinese leaders did not agree with the position and remained concerned, he said, adding however that the Japanese side planned to boost transparency on security issues. "I, in particular, consider it important to establish a relationship of trust in security by expanding our dialogue," he said.

He said a "good and stable" triangular relationship between China, Japan and the United States is "indispensable."

Chief Cabinet Secretary Seiroku Kajiyama caused a

furore just weeks before Mr. Hashimoto's visit here by admitting in a televised interview that a potential conflict between China and Taiwan was included in U.S.-Japanese security guidelines.

Beijing, which considers Taiwan a renegade province, has condemned the existence of such plans as gross interference in its internal affairs.

The Japanese premier is here on a four-day visit to celebrate the 25th anniversary of normalised Sino-Japanese diplomatic ties.

According to analysts, Mr. Kajiyama's public statement is the issue, not the fact that cross-strait conflict appears in Tokyo's military contingency plans something Beijing secretly takes for granted.

Asked if he would take precautions to prevent cabinet members from disturbing Sino-Japanese relations with indiscreet comments in the future, Mr. Hashimoto said Japanese officials are obliged to "respond to any question" put to them formally and urged journalists to "moderate" their questions.

The prime minister is expected later Saturday in the northeastern town of Shenyang, where he will visit the site of the

Manchurian incident of September 18, 1931, in which extremist elements of the Japanese army blew up a railway and blamed it on Chinese troops.

The incident ignited a full-scale Japanese military offensive on China. Mr. Hashimoto said his decision to visit a museum which records the event demonstrates Tokyo's recognition of the past.

"This is looking at history squarely," he said. Asked why nationalist politicians in Japan continue to provoke China with unrepentant acts or statements on the war, he said: "There are many people saying different things... they don't follow the government view or the majority of the Japanese people."

He said a statement of "deep remorse" made by then Premier Tomiichi Murayama in 1995 was Japan's official view, adding that he was involved in drafting the statement.

Beijing has indicated it does not consider the statement an adequate apology.

Mr. Hashimoto will be the first Japanese premier to visit China's northeast, where Japan ruled through the puppet state of Manchukuo from the 1930s to its 1945 defeat in World War II.

Groups vow to topple Ethiopian government

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Ethiopian political and Islamic groups based in Somalia have founded an alliance aimed at overthrowing the government of Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, saying it is an oligarchy of an "undemocratic minority."

The new organisation — the Oromo, Somali and Afar Liberation Alliance (OSALA) — was formed in Mogadishu Friday and said it had established a military force to fight against current governments in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

"OSALA is a culmination of many years of relentless struggle of few far-sighted Oromo, Somali and Afar individuals and groups," the alliance's Chairman Bushra Hussein told a news conference here.

The group comprises the United Oromo People's Liberation Front (UOPLF), Oromo Abbo Liberation Front (OALF), Somali People's Liberation Front (SPLF), Oromo People's Liberation Organisation (OLO), Afar People's Liberation Army (APLA) and Islamic Union of Western Somalia (IUWS).

It accused the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of backing "Albanian-style Communist" regimes in Ethiopia and Eritrea and said the governments in the two countries had killed millions of people opposed to them.

OSALA vowed to put an end to "centuries of Judeo-Christian ideological hegemony," in Ethiopian and Eritrea and install governments committed to the principles of self-determination for all people.

It said the Horn of Africa region was predominantly Muslim and should therefore be governed according to Islamic tenets, although other religions would be tolerated and given official recognition.

Ethiopia has in recent past accused Islamic groups based in neighbouring lawless Somalia of carrying out raids inside Ethiopia and undermining stability in the eastern Ethiopia, inhabited mainly by ethnic Somalis.

Heavily armed Ethiopian troops in August last year attacked the strongholds of the Al Ithad Al Islam, one of the groups accused by Ethiopia of carrying out terrorist raids inside Ethiopia, in the Gedo region of southern Somalia.

Leading H. Kong Democrat more optimistic about Chinese rule

HONG KONG (AFP) — Leading Hong Kong Democrat, Martin Lee is more optimistic about the territory's future under Chinese rule than he was when the territory was handed over by Britain just over two months ago, a report said Saturday.

But Democratic Party Chairman Lee said he still holds grave concerns over political changes and restrictions of civil liberties, the South China Morning Post reported.

Mr. Lee and other members of his party and allies dominated the elected Legislative Council which was scrapped when China resumed sovereignty over Hong Kong on July 1. That body was replaced by a Beijing-appointed legislature, though elections with limited franchise are scheduled to be held next May.

"To a small degree, I'm more optimistic at this moment," Mr. Lee was quoted as saying. "I had good reasons in the past to feel worried about the future."

New laws introduced after the handover, when Tung Chee-hwa was appointed Hong Kong's

first chief executive, restrict the right to demonstrate and impose controls on political and other organisations, though no individuals or groups have yet faced sanctions under the legislation.

"We had a tyrant created by China, having all the draconian powers he needed," Mr. Lee was quoted as saying in the report, which did not indicate where he was speaking.

"He has not used any yet. But there's no guarantee he's not going to use it tomorrow. We can only say the dictator has been benign."

Meanwhile, a mainland Chinese paramilitary officer in full uniform illegally crossed the Hong Kong border as a result of "emotional problems," a government spokesman said Saturday.

The unarmed People's Armed Police officer crossed a bridge at the Lowu frontier checkpoint Friday afternoon and was immediately detained by local police, the spokesman added.

He was returned to China about one hour later at his own request. "We have learned that

the officer seemed to be suffering from personal emotional problems," the spokesman said when asked why he had crossed the border.

It is believed to be the first such illegal crossing since Hong Kong returned to Chinese rule on July 1.

Hong Kong is now a semi-autonomous region of China but retains an independent police force and effectively the same border controls with the mainland as existed under British rule.

James To, the Democratic Party spokesman on security, called for a detailed account by the government on the case and said the incident raised serious questions about border security.

"At least our system detected the happening of the event. I think the other side — Shenzhen side, should have at least reviewed the system to see why seemingly an officer not on duty can pass through their system and come to our side," Mr. To said.



Land, sea battle initiated polio

There is a battle for the land, sea and air in the world's largest polio outbreak, as the disease spreads across the Indian subcontinent.

The outbreak, which has killed more than 100 children, is the worst in the world since the 1960s. It is spreading rapidly across the Indian subcontinent, with the highest incidence in the north-eastern state of Uttar Pradesh.

The disease, which is caused by a virus, is spread by contact with the stool of infected people. It is most common in areas with poor sanitation and a high population density.

The outbreak has caused a major health crisis in the region, with thousands of children affected. The government has launched a large-scale vaccination campaign to try to contain the disease.

The disease is most common in children under the age of five. It can cause paralysis and, in some cases, death. The outbreak has caused a major health crisis in the region, with thousands of children affected.

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Bosnian Serb President Biljana Plavsic waves to supporters during rally in central Bosnian town of Sipovo. Ms. Plavsic called on all Bosnian Serbs to vote in upcoming municipal elections in Bosnian Serb Republic (Reuter photo)

Bosnian Serb parliament to decide Wednesday on holding elections

PALE (AFP) — The Bosnian Serb Parliament is to meet next Wednesday to decide whether to hold municipal elections as scheduled on Sept. 13 and 14, Bosnian Serb Vice-President Aleksa Bubica said.

Bosnian Serb hardliners Friday demanded that the crucial elections be postponed to the end of the month, but the United States insisted the vote would go ahead with or without the Serbs.

"The last word on whether municipal elections will be held or not will be given by our parliament, probably during its meeting on Sept. 10," Mr. Bubica said.

He was speaking after talks with the head of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe mission in Bosnia, Robert Frowick.

Mr. Bubica said the parliament's decision depended on the updating of electoral lists. There would be further talks with Mr. Frowick Monday and Tuesday, and "positive results" would facilitate a parliamentary agreement, he added.

insisted the polls would be held as scheduled. "We made some very considerable progress today and for our part we expect to be able to resolve remaining questions over the next few days," he said.

Top Serb hardliner Momcilo Krajisnik earlier told U.S. Ambassador Richard Kaulbach that the voter lists were rigged and demanded time for a "re-assessment of the electoral lists and rules of the vote," the Serb news agency (SRNA) reported.

The Serb demand, the latest in a string of calls fired out by the hardliners opposed to the Bosnian peace process, puts the Serbs in direct opposition to Washington, which said Friday the elections must proceed as planned.

"If they (the Bosnian Serbs) do not want to participate, the elections will go ahead without them," Robert Gelbard, the U.S. envoy to Bosnia, told journalists at a breakfast in Brussels.

The warning came as NATO ambassadors met with the alliance's Supreme Commander in Europe,

Wesley Clark, to discuss security for the elections, whose success is seen as crucial to the prospects of establishing a long-term peace.

The U.S. stance was backed up by a firm statement from the International Contact Group on Bosnia.

"Municipal elections ... will proceed as scheduled, on Sept. 13 and 14," the Contact Group insisted in a statement.

Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the U.S. also warned that any attacks on international personnel in Bosnia would be greeted with force and that inflammatory broadcasts by the Bosnian Serb media would not be tolerated by the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR).

The polls, which were first supposed to take place last year and have already been delayed three times, are to elect municipal councils across the whole of Bosnia.

A bitter power struggle is underway within the Bosnian Serb leadership with the now pro-Western Serb President Biljana Plavsic on one side and her former ally and predecessor

Radovan Karadzic on the other.

The Karadzic camp fears the local polls, in which Muslims and Croats "ethnically cleansed" during the war are to participate, could lead to the Serbs losing areas under their control.

Mr. Krajisnik said Friday there were "numerous irregularities" in the compilation of the voter lists.

"In certain communes, the number of Muslims is higher than the number of Muslims who lived there before the war," he said.

"For unknown reasons, a great number of Serbs have been wiped off the electoral lists, as have lots of candidates of the Serb Democratic Party," — the hardline ruling Serb party Mr. Krajisnik belongs to.

Earlier in Banja Luka, Ms. Plavsic's stronghold, Mr. Frowick told reporters that "administratively everything is prepared for the municipal elections."

"I believe these elections will take place everywhere in the country, in all parts of RS (the Serb-run part of Bosnia)," he added.

Land, sea battle shatters U.N. initiated polio truce in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO (AFP) — Heavy fighting erupted between Sri Lankan troops and Tamil Tiger rebels on land and sea Saturday, despite a temporary truce brokered by a United Nations agency to carry out an immunisation programme, officials said.

The separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) ambushed a group of soldiers in the eastern district of Polonnaruwa Saturday morning and killed three soldiers, the Defence Ministry said in a statement.

It said two soldiers were seriously wounded in the confrontation. There were no immediate reports of rebel casualties.

Hours earlier, navy gun boats and a flotilla of boats of the LTTE clashed off Chalai, in the north-east of the country, leaving several rebels killed or wounded, official sources said.

They said three boats of the Tigers were sunk by the Israeli-built Dvora gun boats which also suffered damage during the intense pre-dawn battle.

"At least one boat that was sunk carried Tiger suicide cadres," an official said.

The LTTE has successfully used its elite suicide fighters

known as Black Tigers to ram explosives packed boats and trucks against navy craft and other military facilities in the past.

The United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF, had announced earlier that both the LTTE and President Chandrika Kumaratunga's government agreed to observe Friday and Saturday as "days of tranquillity."

The truce was aimed at carrying out a nation-wide polio immunisation campaign that will also cover children in areas of the island's embattled north and the east.

It was not immediately clear if the latest fighting would affect the immunisation programme. The truce, however, held on the first day Friday, officials said.

There had been similar ceasefire periods in 1995 as well as last year. Both parties have agreed not to carry out military operations on October 10 and 11 too to allow the second round of the immunisation.

The LTTE in a statement from its London office Friday said diarrhoea was spreading fast in the coastal area of Mullaitivu under

their control but the government was keeping up a ban on medicines to the region.

"The government's blockade is meant to engender war-weariness in the Tamil population hoping to break their will to resist military occupation," the statement said.

The Sri Lankan navy has stepped up its patrols in the north-east of the country following two attacks against merchant shipping by the rebels and threats to target more ships in the region.

The Tigers hijacked a North Korean cargo vessel after killing a crew member on July 8 and destroyed a 500-seater ferry a week earlier.

The remaining North Korean crew of 37 were freed and later their ship was also returned but the Tigers still hold seven seamen from the ferry.

Tiger guerrillas are leading a drawn out campaign for independence in the island's northern and eastern regions where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated.

More than 50,000 people have been killed in bitter fighting in the past 25 years.

Songs and dances kick off Moscow anniversary bash

MOSCOW (AFP) — Traditional Russian songs and dances by artists dressed in bright red costumes kicked off the celebrations late Friday to mark Moscow's 850th anniversary.

Speaking at opening ceremonies by the statue of the city's legendary founder, Yuri Dolgoruki, Russian President Boris Yeltsin said that in spite of its "respectable age" Moscow was still looking good, and becoming more beautiful each year.

Earlier in the day aircraft seeding the unseasonable clouds over the city with silver iodide in a bid to keep the rain off the weekend of celebrations.

A gala concert was staged late Friday evening in Red Square, though star international tenor Luciano Pavarotti, who had been scheduled to perform, cancelled at the last minute.

On the agenda for Saturday was a parade headed by Moscow's energetic Mayor Yuri Luzhkov and a spectacular laser show by French composer Jean-Michel Jarre.

The celebrations will wind up Sunday in the enormous Luzhniki Stadium, covered with a new roof, where 50,000 people will watch a show by 2,500 artists.

In the streets Muscovites and visitors from outside can enjoy free concerts and spectacles, join parades and taste culinary delights prepared by chefs from all over the country.

Hundreds of buildings have been repainted, streets resurfaced and bedecked with flags, and buildings inaugurated, including a new pedestrian bridge across the Moscow River, the Luzhniki Stadium, a huge underground shopping mall near the Kremlin and the Christ the Saviour Cathedral, pulled down by Soviet dictator Josef Stalin and recently rebuilt.

Raul Castro vows to arrest blast perpetrators

CIENFUEGOS (AFP) — Raul Castro, brother and designated successor of President Fidel Castro, vowed Friday that the people who authored a series of blasts in Havana will be arrested.

The blasts, which killed a 32-year-old Italian tourist Thursday, "are raising the ire of all the people," Mr. Castro, who is head of the country's armed forces, said in this central Cuban city.

"I take full responsibility in assuring you that our interior minister can find a needle in a haystack," said Mr. Castro, who attended military ceremonies here marking the 40th anniversary of the fall of Cuban dictator, Fulgencio Batista.

An explosion rocked Havana's best known bar late Thursday, a former haunt of Ernest Hemingway popular with tourists. Earlier in the day, blasts at three ocean-front hotels in Havana's posh Miramar district killed Fabio Di Celmo, a Genoese-born Italian national living in Montreal, Canada.

Di Celmo was the first fatality in a wave of bomb attacks on tourist hotels apparently aimed at undermining the vital tourist trade.

Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina said meanwhile that the United States must act to stem the wave of attacks, which has included seven bombings in less than two months.

Mr. Robaina said Cuban authorities had evidence that the blasts, which he called "terrorist" attacks, were "organised, supplied and directed from U.S. territory," and were part of the U.S. goal of strangling the Cuban economy.

Although U.S. officials have denied any knowledge or involvement in the violence and have condemned the attacks, Mr. Robaina said that was not enough.

"It is there (in the United States) where these crimes are being concocted, and they must be attacked there with concrete actions," Mr. Robaina told journalists.

The Mexican government Friday condemned "most

energetically" the attacks on tourist sites in Cuba, the Foreign Ministry said in a statement issued in Mexico City.

Mexico "profoundly regrets the injuries inflicted on innocent people and, above all, the irretrievable loss of life of the Italian Fabio Di Celmo," the statement said.

The statement said the Mexican government "rejects terrorism regardless of the reasons used to justify it." Mexico also expressed "solidarity with the Cuban people and government" as well as "anger over the injuries created by the violence against our sister nation."

Indonesia's ruling party tips chairman as house speaker

JAKARTA (AFP) — Indonesia's ruling Golkar party has named its chairman, Harmoko, as a candidate for house speaker for the 1997-2002 term, a report said here Saturday.

"As winner of the general election, with the support of the majority of the people, of course we would like the house speaker to be from Golkar, that is, Mr. Harmoko," said top party official, Abd-dul Ghafur.

However Mr. Ghafur was quoted by the Kompas daily as saying that Golkar would only officially nominate Mr. Harmoko after the new parliamentary members for the 1997-2002 term are sworn in on

October 1. Besides being the chairman of President Suharto's Golkar party, Mr. Harmoko was previously the country's information minister.

However in a surprise move, Mr. Harmoko was replaced by Army Chief General Raden Hartono in June, shortly after the May 29 general elections in which Golkar swept over 75 per cent of the votes.

Mr. Harmoko was appointed state minister for special assignments, which mainly involves preparing new parliamentarians for their positions. Analysts have predicted that the reshuffle was done to prepare Mr. Harmoko to

be speaker. Under Mr. Harmoko as information minister, the authorities banned two leading newspapers, Sinar Harapan and Prioritas, and three leading weeklies — Tempo, Editor and DeTik. The bannings received intense domestic and international criticism.

If he becomes house speaker, Mr. Harmoko would be the first civilian to attain the post since Mr. Suharto's New Order government came to power in the late 1960s. Previous house speakers, including current speaker Gen. Wahono were retired armed forces generals.

Unknown group claims deadly Philippine blasts

MANILA (AFP) — A previously unknown group claimed responsibility Saturday for two grenade blasts in the Philippines in which seven people were killed and dozens injured, a radio report said.

The group, which identified itself as the Filipino Soldiers for the Nation, said they supported changes to the constitution which would allow President Fidel Ramos to serve a second term, in a statement to the private radio station DZBB.

Seven people were killed in the two explosions which occurred within minutes of each other Wednesday. Three bystanders were killed in one blast at a crowded Manila street and four died in an explosion inside a bus north of the capital, police said.

The proposed rewrite of the constitution is widely seen as being aimed at letting Mr. Ramos serve a second term beyond his one permitted six-year stint, which ends on June 30 next year.

"The two explosions Wednesday ... are just the beginning of a series of military actions by the Filipino Soldiers for the Nation," the group said in the statement written in the Tagalog national language.

"Now, the progress and peace being experienced by the country under the leadership of President Fidel Ramos is being destroyed by some people who are not in favour of real change," said the statement.

"We want to tell the people that the issue of constitutional change is very important

and justify the declaration of martial law. A series of mysterious blasts rocked the country before Marcos declared martial law in 1972.

"I am not the dictator type," Mr. Ramos told business leaders Friday, citing his role in the restoration of democracy when he helped lead the 1986 popular uprising that toppled Marcos.

Police said they were still investigating a motive for the explosions. News reports Saturday said justice department agents had found two rifle grenades at a garbage dump in Manila Friday.

Former President Corazon Aquino and Manila Archbishop Cardinal Jaime Sin have called on Filipinos to join a rally on Sept. 21 to oppose moves to amend the national charter.

Bomb explodes at Tajikistan reconciliation talks site

DUSHANBE (AFP) — A bomb exploded late Friday in a Dushanbe hotel where a national reconciliation commission to bring peace to Tajikistan is scheduled to start meeting Monday.

The blast caused material damage to the first floor of the building but no casualties,

the Interior Ministry said.

The commission made up of government and opposition members has to supervise the application of the June 27 peace accord signed in Moscow which ended five years of Tajik civil war.

It will establish a joint electoral commission to prepare

for free and democratic parliamentary elections set for 1998.

Earlier Friday, a unit of 206 opposition Islamic fighters arrived in Dushanbe to help protect the National Reconciliation Commission.

An Interior Ministry spokesman said the bomb

had probably been planted by a "third force" opposed to peace in Tajikistan.

The former Central Asian Soviet Republic has been shaken by fighting between rival colonels in government positions, putting in question the resilience of the peace accord.

Kabul faces bleak options for future

KABUL (R) — For the long-suffering citizens of Kabul daily life is a struggle — much of the city is in ruins and the occupying Taliban forces are seeking to impose a purist vision of Islam.

But despite their hardships, Kabulis have no strong wish to see a victory of the opposition, whose guns are now less than 20 kilometres from the city.

The recapture of Kabul by opposition commander, Ahmad Shah Masood would not be a reassuring prospect for many people despite the relative Liberalism he promises.

Mr. Masood was the mili-

tary power behind the ousted government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

"Under Mr. Masood it was terrible in Kabul. His commanders were corrupt and made looting a way of life. The city was under constant bombardment and was blockaded for almost four years. All the destruction you see happened when Masood was in power," says one Afghan.

There is a deep ambivalence as to whether the opposition would make better masters than the Taliban, even though the Islamic purists have a stern creed.

The Taliban, who took Kabul almost a year ago,

have banned women from the work place and forced them to wear the all-enveloping burqa veil — a shroud-like garment with a small hexagonal patch of gauze to see out of — in public, and ordered men to grow beards.

The city was an island of relative modernity in a country that often feels as though it is mired in the middle ages, and its relatively cosmopolitan population fear they are being dragged back from the brink of the twentieth century.

These people have no idea of the world, they are trying to force Kabul to conform to the social values of a rural

southern village," says an Afghan, who did not want his name used. Criticism of the Taliban leaves one open to accusations of being a bad Muslim.

"In the three years since they first became a force in Afghanistan, they have not learnt how to govern. There is no structure and they defer all questions of policy, saying they will be addressed when the emergency is over," he says.

But he says the Taliban may be the lesser of two evils and deserve credit for bringing a measure of much-needed security, particularly in the rural areas. Before the arrival of the

Taliban, the south of the country was carved up into fiefdoms of petty warlords who were in a perpetual state of low-intensity hostilities.

The roads had become all but impassable for all but the very poor, who had nothing to lose, and those rich enough to bribe their way through the numerous checkpoints.

"They cleared the roads and dismantled the warlords. I don't think any other faction would have been able to do that," he says.

"At least with the Taliban life is more predictable. There is less corruption and they have not looted us,"

says the Kabuli.

Under Mr. Masood, Kabul was blockaded and food prices soared.

"If Mr. Masood comes back, the Taliban will blockade the city again. People can only just afford to feed themselves as it is, if prices get any higher they will starve," he says.

Women have been particularly hard hit under the Taliban. They are banned from working except in the medical sector. Girls' schools have been closed, and the Taliban have shown little inclination to reopen them despite offers from international aid organisations to fund segregated

education.

Kabul's huge population of widows has suffered disproportionately. In a July ordinance, the Taliban banned women from receiving aid directly, saying that it had to be channelled through their male relatives.

At least one aid agency has closed down its operations in protest at the decree.

For most of the city's residents, the most pressing problem is the state of the economy.

"I have no job and there are no jobs to be found. No one has any money," says Abdul Hamid.

Kabul's heavy industrial base has been destroyed. In

the past years the government has provided most of the employment, but the Taliban have been unable to pay its civil servants.

The United Nations estimate that almost half of the population of Kabul receive some sort of assistance from the international community.

A recent survey showed that over half of the city's residents had been forced to sell some of their belongings to survive.

There is little sign that either the Taliban or the opposition will be able to improve the lives of people in Kabul any time soon.

NEWS ANALYSIS

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Editor-in-Chief:

GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,

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Telephone: 684311, 699634

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

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Cause lives on

WITH THE death of Mother Theresa, so soon after the tragic death of Princess Diana last Sunday, the world has lost two major pillars of humanitarian work across the globe. As the late Princess of Wales who was laid to rest yesterday, after a week of unprecedented outpouring of sorrow from all the four corners of the world, the passing away of Mother Theresa has also touched the hearts and minds of so many people, both rich and poor, sick or in good health.

It was no accident that the efforts of the "Saint of the Gutters," as she became to be known, were recognised as legendary in the quest to alleviate the suffering of the poor and the sick. Starting in the streets of Calcutta, where she founded the Missionary of Charity, and spreading to other parts of the developing countries, where the outcry of the homeless and the needy remained unanswered by the international community, she created an "empire of love" consisting of 4,400 sisters and brothers who shunned worldly goals in order to come to the rescue of the least privileged human beings.

Not surprisingly, Mother Theresa won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 in recognition of her dedication and determination to seek out the needy regardless of race, colour or ethnic origin offering them love, affection and assistance where and when it counted most. Coming from a woman who was once described by the Calcutta Archbishop Monsignor Ferdinand Periers as a "novice who would not even know how to light a candle," Mother Theresa's half a century of humanitarian work in the most direct and simple manner impressed statesmen, clergymen and social workers alike and touched the hearts of human beings everywhere.

In retrospect, Mother Theresa's humanitarian projects, as indeed the efforts of Princess Diana, were inspired by the urgent need to fill a vacuum that no international organisation or institution has been able to fill until now. Despite the proliferating international bodies created to deal with poverty, deprivation and sickness, there remains much room for additional work to be done. Reaching out to the underprivileged, wherever they exist, Mother Theresa's mission will always be remembered by all peoples as a vivid testimony of her ability to stir humanism in the hearts and minds of so many others.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Arah Al Yawm Saturday criticised Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for accusing Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat of failing to control the Palestinian extremist elements who the Israeli premier accuses of being responsible for the explosions in Jerusalem. Saleh Qallah said that the series of suicide attacks that happened in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and other parts of Israel are to be blamed squarely on the Israeli military which failed in its duty to prevent such attacks. All these areas are under the control of the Israeli government and the Palestinian National Authority, noted the writer. He said that such attacks occur all the time in Algeria, Egypt and even in Britain and are considered normal reactions to certain political or military situations. The writer said that if the Israeli armed forces and Israel's formidable military power seem unable to prevent such attacks, they might entrust Mr. Arafat and his men with the task of controlling the security situation in western Jerusalem to guarantee peace for the Israeli society. He said that the attacks came as a natural consequence of the continued occupation and acts of repression and can by no means end unless Israel recognises the Palestinian people's rights in their own homeland.

A WRITER for Al Dostour urged the groups intending to boycott the elections to reconsider their positions because, he said, boycotting them can only cause harm to the Palestinians and the parliamentary life in Jordan. Oreib Rintawi said that groups and political parties who tend to distance themselves from the parliamentary arena are bound to gradually lose contact with the public and their influence will be corroded with the lapse of time. The writer said that if the elections take place on schedule, a new parliament void of opposition will be elected; he also noted that some of the pro-boycott groups might individually choose to vote, thus breaking the boycott and rendering it meaningless. At the same time, the writer warned, these groups can by no means instigate people to not vote in the elections because they are liable to be prosecuted, in accordance with the Jordanian laws.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Privatisation has virtues but it is not pressing

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

THE DECISION to go ahead with privatisation in Jordan has been taken at the highest political level; the government took tangible steps in that direction. A full-fledged privatisation unit was established at the Prime Ministry, and some government share holdings in hotels have actually been sold to private investors. However, no one can deny the fact that the privatisation process is going very slow.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) admitted that the implementation of economic reform was in most cases ahead of the plan, and that most of the actual achievements exceeded the targets. Why then is the privatisation process, in particular, going so slow?

The answer to this question is that the actual state of affairs in Jordan does not give privatisation any sort of priority or urgency, as I shall demonstrate below.

Contrary to the conventional wisdom, the size of the Jordanian public-sector enterprises, engaged in producing commodities and services to be sold in the market, is rather small. Even the World Bank, in its report on privatisation in Jordan (1995), admitted that there is no problem or crisis that may render remedy through privatisation an

urgent matter.

World Bank reports state that public sector enterprises in Third World countries contribute around 11 per cent of those countries' gross domestic product (GDP). This rate is an indicator of the size of the public sector that should be subjected to privatisation. It rises to 14 per cent in the extremely poor and underdeveloped countries, while it drops in the industrialised countries from nine to seven per cent, thanks to the privatisation trend.

Now, if it is true that the enterprises of the Jordanian public sector make no more than six per cent of the country's GDP, as the World Bank specific report on Jordan claims, then one can conclude that the existing privatisation level in Jordan is far ahead the level prevailing in both developing and developed countries. Then if things are so, why hurry?

Make no mistake, I am convinced of the virtues of privatisation from an efficiency point of view. I do not deny that private enterprises are, in general, superior to public sector enterprises in their management, quality of product, pricing and marketing. It is definitely advantageous to the Jordanian economy to go ahead with the privatisation pro-

gramme, but one should realise at the same time that, when it comes to the Kingdom, the problem which privatisation is meant to solve are indeed minor or very small.

On the other hand, most of the Jordanian companies and corporations targeted for privatisation are known to be efficient and run satisfactorily, including enterprises producing cement, phosphate, potash, fertilisers and electricity.

Based on these facts, the gains expected to result from the privatisation process in Jordan will be minimal. There are, however, administrative short-comings and financial problems in certain sectors, such as water distribution and land transportation, and technical challenges in the communications sector, which deserve some priority in partial or total privatisation or in attracting a strategic partner in the case of the Telecommunication Company (TCC).

In any case, we should not deal with privatisation from an ideological viewpoint, and thus see in it either absolute good or absolute evil. Each case should be evaluated on its own merits. We can take our time to avoid mistakes; after all, privatisation in Jordan is not an urgent matter and has no priority on the agenda of economic reform.

Privatisation — the name of the game for economy to prosper

By Adel Qudah

THE WORD "privatisation" appeared in the dictionary for the first time in 1983 and was defined as "transferring governmental works and projects to private ownership."

The word began to gain a broader meaning as different needs and demands of the society had to be approached in new ways and the role of the government had to be reconsidered. That meant that greater responsibility would be shouldered by the private sector and the role of government would be minimised; it also meant that the private sector's assets in the national economy would increase.

Privatisation implies a series of economic reforms, such as intensifying the role of market economy and activating national management competition, in addition to redrawing financial

policies and resetting laws and rules in order to achieve transparency and fairness.

Consecutive Jordanian governments have observed the principle of free economy, that depends on individual initiative and adaptation to offer and demand mechanisms.

At the same time, the public sector had a vital role in drawing economic policies that beheld national interests. With time, the public sector's role grew to include establishing infrastructure projects and cooperating with the private sector in big production projects, such as phosphate, cement and potash mining projects that the latter would have been unable to handle alone.

The privatisation policy started in the first quarter of 1985, after a Royal Decree calling on encouraging the private sector to take a leading role in the development of several sectors, including health and education.

The process came as part of a complete economic package adopted by the government in the 1990s and was imposed by the economic situation and the international developments affecting the country.

Privatisation came after several studies and surveys were conducted showing that a great degree of incompetence was prevailing in the public sector even though some of the public companies were monopolies that demanded high prices for their products and enjoyed the advantage of being allowed to obtain loans and government guarantees easily.

The private sector companies seem to obtain better revenues and provide better working opportunities for each invested dinar. This shows practical and managerial competence that is absent in public sector enterprises.

Some public sector com-

panies have faced losses year after year, yet survived with the help of the treasury; examples are Ma'in Spa, Royal Jordanian, Aqaba Railroad, Irbid electricity company, public transportation companies, the Sawt Al Shaab newspaper, glass factories and TV productions.

At times the losses are not declared, under social and political pretenses that have cost the treasury and public great losses. Therefore, it is clear that in order to protect public and commercial interests there is need for privatisation, especially since it makes no political or economic sense to allow a project or a company that has lost its capital and borrowed heavily — instead of bringing profits and providing the public with good quality products that could also be exported — to continue functioning.

The government has the duty to provide the appro-

prate atmosphere for private investment, attract investment, fight poverty and remove all aspects hindering development.

Public projects or government shares in companies are privileges gathered over decades; revenues from selling them should be shared by the public and benefit the national economy.

A trust fund is suggested to place these revenues which could be invested in specific areas; thus, the fund would become a source of investment and could be called "National Investment Fund."

After deducting the cost of selling the shares, the net profit from the sale could be deposited in the fund, and the revenues would no longer be considered part of the general budget to be used by the government since the privatisation process does not aim at rectifying imbalances in its general budget.

This fund should also be managed competently if it is to cope with the demands of the upcoming stage. Management should be done by independent committee that would set up future policies and strategies for investment and the best use of the fund.

A part of the revenues could also be used to help alleviate social problems, such as unemployment and poverty; that can be done through financing small projects, investing in promising sectors, such as higher and technical education, production of specialised medicine and through financing maintenance of the infrastructure projects that help economy develop.

The writer heads the executive unit for privatisation at the Prime Ministry. This article appeared in Arabic in Al Aswaa daily on Aug. 30.

'So far, the familiar paradigms of the Israeli-Syrian relationship are still in place'

By Itamar Rabinovich

The writer is the Etinger Professor of Contemporary Middle Eastern History at Tel Aviv University. He was Israel's ambassador to Washington and chief negotiator with Syria. The article below is reprinted from The Jerusalem Post.

THE ISRAELI-Syrian negotiating track has been idle for a year and a half now. Several attempts to devise a formula for renewing the negotiations failed to bridge the gap between the positions of Assad's regime and Netanyahu's government. But failure to negotiate has not meant lack of engagement. By giving Hizbollah the green light in Lebanon and by exercising diplomatic pressure in the regional and diplomatic arenas, Syria has been telling Israel that it will not comply with a permanent stalemate.

The past two weeks have seen a particularly intense spate of Syrian activity: A delegation of Israeli Arab politicians and public figures was invited to Damascus; a significant address by President Hafez Assad to that group; an interesting interview by Syrian Defence Minister Mustafa Tlass; and an unusual commentary on Radio Damascus during the past week. (The publication in Israel of transcripts of the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's discussions of the withdrawal issue in 1994 has fanned discussion and debate in Israel but is unrelated to the spate of Syrian activities).

Damascus is clearly confounded by the statements and activities of Netanyahu's government with regard to Syria. When Assad spoke to the visiting delegation of Israeli Arabs, he told its members that "Netanyahu has thus far made strange statements. He proposed exchanging peace for peace and later he proposed exchanging peace for security. Afterwards he

announced that he is for U.N. resolutions 242 and 338 according to his own interpretation of them."

The Syrian president was referring to the messages that several intermediaries — American and European diplomats, as well as private emissaries — have carried from Jerusalem to Damascus. Some of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's interlocutors walked away with a clear impression that Netanyahu is determined at some point to seek an accommodation with Damascus with full realisation of what it would take.

At least one of the messages sounded quite far-reaching. According to an Israeli press report, only faintly denied by the government, one of Netanyahu's messages to Assad did tie the depth of withdrawal (or Israel's concessions) to the depth of the security arrangements. This formula is not all that different from the original formula coined by Rabin in 1993.

"...one of Netanyahu's messages to Assad did tie the depth of withdrawal (or Israel's concessions) to the depth of the security arrangements. This formula is not all that different from the original formula coined by Rabin in 1993."

government's recent actions and statements have sent an entirely different message. Three of them have been particularly significant:

(1) When the Golan Enfranchisement Law was submitted to the Knesset (requiring a special majority for repealing the 1981 extension of Israeli law to the Golan) the cabinet and the prime minister, after initial opposition, ended up voting for it.

(2) It has been revealed that the government has apparently decided to build a dam (agreed upon with second Clinton administration, in Madeline Albright's State Department and in the new circumstances in the peace process, Damascus has lost its centrality. The accent of U.S. policy is salvaging the Israeli-Palestinian track and not on resuscitating the negotiations with Syria.

In the face of these developments, Syria has adopted a two-track policy. One is to prepare for war and to talk of war. Assad's trip to Tehran, the defence minister's statement and the chief of staff's recent implied

threat to resort to military action have all been made in this vein.

The other is a decision to address the Israeli political system. In past years, all efforts by the Clinton administration and by us, the Israeli negotiators, to persuade our Syrian interlocutors to engage in public diplomacy had met with limited success. Assad regarded Israel's public opinion and political system as a "blank check." He and the prime minister should come to an agreement and it should be up to each of them "to deliver" his country.

It was only recently that the complexity of Israeli politics and the need to deal with it have been fully grasped by Assad and his men. They began by addressing Israel's Arab minority. Unlike a previous occasion in 1994, it was Damascus that initiated this visit of the Israeli Arab delegation, and it was Damascus that determined that members of "Zionist" parties be included. This was all done quite clumsily, but it certainly represented a change and a beginning.

Then came Radio Damascus commentary referring to the debate in Israel concerning a unilateral withdrawal from south Lebanon. It is not Syria that prevents Netanyahu from pulling the IDF out of south Lebanon; Syria has said several times that it will "welcome an immediate Israeli withdrawal," said the commentator. This is an interesting formulation that represents a novel Syrian approach to Israel's public opinion and its impact.

This is all very interesting and indicative of potential developments in the future. But in the meantime we must not read too much into it. Change in Assad's Syria is a slow, gradual process and so far, the familiar paradigms of the Israeli-Syrian relationship are still in place.

LETTERS

Friends in Africa

To the Editor:

ALLOW ME, through your esteemed paper, to thank the people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the hospitality accorded me and my colleagues who participated in the 1st UNU/ILA at the University of Jordan in June.

It was my first visit to Jordan and I did not want to leave. The people of Jordan are amazing in many ways. For instance, the way Jordanians are fighting to develop in that expanse of desert and in the midst of regional hostilities is a lesson every nation in the world should learn because there is plenty of success to see. I was deeply impressed by the humility of His Majesty King Hussein, the grace of Queen Noor, the intellect of Prince Hassan, the foresight of Premier Majali (and his amazing wife), and the insight of the many people we interacted with. They all made me feel like wanting to return to Jordan — which I hope to do some day.

Wherever we went and whoever we met was wonderful — from the staff of UNU/ILA to the staff at Middle East Hotel and Eastern Travel to the people at the university and those at Al Amal centre, to the people in Petra, Jerash, Ajloun... It is difficult to mention all, but all please kindly accept this public thank you.

In Uganda now, I have decided to be an ambassador for Jordan. I know that there is a lot that could be done by the people of Jordan and those of Uganda for the betterment of humanity.

If you come and visit Uganda some day, you now have true friends in Africa.

Erich Ogogo Opolot,
Participant UNU/ILA,
Uganda.

Camp of peace

To the Editor:

HAVING READ the article "Seeds the Peace" (Jordan Times, August 30, 1997), I want to talk about my holiday at the Seeds of Peace camp this summer.

It was one of the most amazing experiences I ever had. The camp means Arab and Israeli teenagers living together under the same roof for a whole month.

I had never imagined to see Arabs, especially Palestinians, become good friends with Israelis, but that is exactly what happened in the camp.

We made the borders of our countries vanish for a month.

Our relationships grew through sports, various activities and the "coexistence sessions", which involved discussing issues very sensitive to both Palestinians and Israelis. At the camp we learned to listen to each other, and we always managed to understand each other in the end.

I am very grateful I had the opportunity to participate in the Seeds of Peace camp.

Shirin Hanafiah,
Amman.

Features
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Interdependent approach is needed for effective school curriculum change

By Richard Tanner

WHEN THE Ministry of Education wants to change the curriculum, where does it go for help and guidance? Inevitably, as the curriculum is a set of subjects, it goes to the university departments dealing with the subject(s) involved. After some discussions, the ministry commissions academic writers to draft textbooks for students, which are printed and distributed to schools at the end of one school year for implementation at the beginning of the next.

This represents the fastest and cheapest way to change what is taught in schools, satisfies both government and academics who can own blame teachers for any student shortcomings. Teachers continue teaching in the same way — they are usually traditionalists — and nothing fundamental changes. Everyone is dissatisfied, except maybe the parents, falsely reassured that what was good enough for them will be good enough for their children.

But the world is changing. When I was young, we learnt spelling, as there were no spell-checkers, mental arithmetic, as there were no electronic calculators, handwriting, as there were no word processors. Foreign countries were foreign, as few people travelled, jet aircraft were in their infancy, cars quite rare, and so on. If change in England was fast, how much faster is it in Jordan? And yet, teachers continue to teach much the same material in much the same way. Of course, they have rarely been trained, hardly ever seen anyone teach other than their own teachers: older teachers teach what they have taught for years and younger ones are often too scared to innovate — it is safer and easier to stay in the groove.

Some children do not succeed in school; teachers are exceptions, otherwise how and why would they become teachers? Their values came from the successful end of the spectrum, revealed in that "could do better" comment on end-of-year reports. Too many teachers put too many students off learning for life, except to pass exams. How many of us have recently picked up a book to read, written an article or taken a course to further our personal development? Yet, in this changing world, we all know the importance of education. So what can be done to develop more effective teaching and learning in our schools?

This debate is carried on around the world. A continuum of methods can be detected, ranging from centrally directed, as in Jordan, participative to fully democratic. I will have some illustrations

from England, which I know best. There, because school-leaving exams were all important, curriculum change was brought about by examination change. When Margaret Thatcher raised the school-leaving age from 15 to 16 years, in the mid-1970s, there was a flurry of activity which resulted in the growth of the CSE, a lower-level exam than the GCE, designed to cater for the less able student. The exam boards gave two or three years' notice of the change and ran workshops for groups of teachers to prepare them. Dispensing wisdom from the centre to the periphery like this still continues with exams into higher education like Advanced Level (AL) and International Baccalaureate (IB).

A more participative approach rapidly followed as GCE and CSE were combined in the 1980s into GCSE, an exam for all 16-year-olds. Teachers with expertise were recruited to aid the development of GCSE alongside teacher trainers: the periphery began to influence the centre. Projects like geography for the Young School Leavers (GYSL) developed from CSE into GCSE using teacher trainers from one university. They designed the new curriculum with sample materials for testing in trial schools. Successful practice was replicated in clusters of new GYSL schools, with experienced teachers training other teachers in how to use the new materials and, more importantly, how to design their own, all supported by headteachers and adviser-inspectors.

Naturally, this took two or three years to set up the project, six to 18 months to train such clusters, and two years to teach the course to students. But it was so successful that GYSL is still running, 25 years later, across England and Wales. One of the reasons for its continuing success is its feedback system, built in from the start, where teachers are enabled, feel their views are heard, and the periphery does influence the centre: in short, they "own" the project.

If this interactive method is successful in influencing the periphery and in changing what teachers and students actually do in the classroom, then why not go to the end of the spectrum with a fully interdependent approach? Government could canvass views about curriculum change from the public, the providers and the end-users, publish a consultative paper, inviting comments from interested parties, then set up task groups to deliver the changes agreed. To do so would require an informed public, professional providers, involved end-users and open communi-

cation between all three groups. Having been a significant local player in the "Industry in Schools" project from 1985-92, I can outline the potential benefits:

(i) government sets agreed criteria and pays on delivery;

(ii) teachers are actively involved with one another, sharing good ideas and practices;

(iii) government appoints, teachers and trainers, parents and employers meet to achieve common goals and gain confidence in one another.

Such a participative, evolutionary method of curriculum change is likely to prove the most effective, even if it is the slowest, especially in its early stages. Democratic methods take time.

The question to be posed to government and public is "Where is Jordan now?" to teachers and school boards, "Where is your school?"

If the Ministry of Education still believes in the centralised, top-down, model of curriculum change, then only the fast but ineffective directed method is available to it. If the universities and trainers are remote from schools, they can play no useful role. If school principals and boards believe they are still tending "secret gardens," then they should expect imposition from above. If teachers are unwilling or unable to participate, they too can expect a dominant centre-periphery approach. Even if a school is willing to participate, and I knew several trying to change, it cannot do so alone. The range of experiences needed can only come from groups of teachers sharing experiences from different schools. Such groups must be open to outsiders, both professional (teachers, child psychologist, academic specialist) and lay (parent, employer).

Time and money, probably not that much, and, above all, support and encouragement need to be given to ensure successful innovation. No man is an island, yet if schools remain insular, this participative, periphery-based model is doomed to failure.

Education is too important to be left to vested interests. If Jordan needs a curriculum change, and a changing world demands that, and if we know how effective curriculum change can be brought about, isn't it time for government and education to move? Jordan's children and its future prosperity depend on both.

The writer is teacher of geography at the Baccalaureate School, Amman. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

12 years on, NHF is one of the leading development-oriented institutions

By a reporter

ON SEPT. 4, 1985, Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) was established by a Royal Decree to consolidate Her Majesty Queen Noor's diverse and expanding development endeavours. The foundation seeks to identify and meet different development needs in Jordan, to introduce innovative and dynamic integrated community development models and to set national standards of excellence in human and socio-economic development, education, culture and arts.

Twelve years later, the foundation has expanded into an extensive network of projects spread across the Kingdom. The impressive growth achieved by NHF in the last 12 years was made possible by new, innovative perspectives for development that do not see socio-economic and cultural changes merely as a "top down, one-way process" with a heavy economic focus.

"We do not get involved in charity work, preferring to support individuals and communities in development projects that promote self-reliance, self-help and self-management," says NHF Executive Director Yasser Tal. He added that NHF supports democratic grassroots participation in decision making and implementation of development projects and maximises the use of appropriate technology and local resources.

Unlike some traditional, one-time development projects, NHF's programmes are designed to be long-term, with heavy focus on initiating and sustaining income-generating ventures. The foundation's Quality of Life Project (QLP) is a case in point.

Currently implemented on 15 sites, the project, which benefits about 7,000 people, was established to enhance the overall quality of life in the rural areas of the Kingdom by promoting



Working for oneself: NHF projects enable people to become self-sufficient, enriching their lives both spiritually and financially

patterns of integrated development that draw heavily on consensus-building and human resource development.

"Thanks to NHF's Quality of Life Project, I became a businessman after years of unemployment," says Zaki Awad. He is now earning a monthly income of JD 85 as a guard in one of the QLP's palm nurseries, in addition to the yield he gets from planting ornamental trees that the project provided him with and from his bee-keeping project which he launched with assistance from the QLP.

Another project that works within the family and community development is the Wadi Seer Community Development Project, which seeks to accelerate comprehensive socio-economic development in five villages in the Wadi Seer area. Its site became a handicraft tourism village. By implementing a market-oriented business approach that encourages individual ini-

tiative, the project, which benefits 5,442 people, seeks to revive traditional Jordanian crafts to meet market demand in Jordan's growing tourism sector.

"The first step before we start a project is study the marketability of its output in order to ensure sustainability and create job opportunities," says Mr. Tal.

The question of product marketability becomes especially significant when it comes to items requiring a high degree of accuracy and creativity, such as handicraft.

The foundation sponsors a handicraft development project that seeks to revive traditional crafts and preserve a unique aspect of Jordan's national heritage. Training of craftspeople takes place at the Salt Handicrafts Centre which is dedicated to the development of a new generation of skilled Jordanian craftspeople and trainers, while the Jordan Design and Trade Centre (JDTC) seeks to raise the standard of Jordanian handicrafts production in order to create marketing opportunities.

When NHF offered Fada Mijwel the opportunity to benefit from its JDTC's project in Al Husseiniyah village, Ms. Mijwel and her family were living below the poverty line. Now she is earning a monthly income of up to JD 200 as a rug weaver, and that made her able to finance her son's education at the University of Jordan.

Another component of the NHF development philosophy is that all projects and programmes are created to meet emerging needs of communities. For instance, the need for an institution to raise child health care standards in Jordan by improving growth monitoring, diagnosis and treatment practices has given rise to the establishment of NHF's Institute for Child Health and Development. Until now the number of children registered at the institute is 6,657, while the number of mothers registered reached

2,552.

The NHF has established projects that foster individual talent and creativity in the fields of education, music, theatre and cultural interaction. These include the National Music Conservatory (NMC), which was founded to encourage the development of accomplished musicians and to promote music appreciation in Jordan. Salah Marawa, one of the NMC's talented qanoun students, represented Jordan as a member of the NMC's Arab Music Ensemble in the Famjad Festival, Turkey, in which the NMC won the first prize. He also represented Jordan in the International Qanoun Competition, held in Cairo, and won a special prize for his outstanding performance.

The Performing Arts Centre, which was launched to enhance children's learning experiences through drama and theatre, won this year the silver prize of the Third Cairo's Radio and Television Festival for its musical play "Madinat Al Sawasana," and is currently carrying out a programme for promoting non-violent resolution of conflicts in the elementary schools throughout Jordan.

The Jubilee School, which is an independent co-educational secondary school for outstanding scholarship students, graduated its first class of students this year. The school, which is dedicated to the development of the intellect and leadership potential of the Arab students, will be moved to its permanent buildings in Yajouz in the second 1997/98 academic semester. It has graduated 206 students and currently includes 358 students.

The foundation's Women-in-Development Department accelerates the integration, participation and representation of low-income women in national socio-economic development. The department initiates innovative income-generating schemes based on self-employment and home production. Pilot pro-

jects established so far include a Bee Keeping and Honey Production Project, Medicinal Herbs Project, Footwear Production Workshop, Garment Production Unit, Community Development Centre, Tricot Knitwear Project, the Population Programmes for Grassroots that introduces reproductive health and family planning concepts in 13 remote villages throughout Jordan, and the most recent Women's Leadership Programme and the tie-dye Project.

The NHF has received the Excellence in Arab Childhood Services Award in Sharjah this year for its distinguished role in child care. The foundation sponsors many projects and activities in the field of children's welfare, among which are Children's Heritage and Science Museum, the Mobile Life and Science Museum, Queen Noor Award for Children's Literature, which is opened this year for the Arab writers, and the annual Arab Children's Congress, which provided the opportunity for 1,245 children from throughout the Arab World to participate in a programme designed to promote understanding and solidarity.

The NHF projects and programmes are designed to be locally sustainable and replicable in different parts of Jordan and the region and many of its projects have been recognised by international organisations as model projects for the Middle East and the developing world.

Twelve years after it was established, NHF has realised many of the goals it has set for itself and worked its way through different obstacles to become one of the leading development-oriented institutions in Jordan.

"The NHF proceeds with a renewed vigour in its development work," says Mr. Tal, identifying difficulties and providing solutions that are responsive to the needs and aspirations of the people of Jordan it is trying to better serve.

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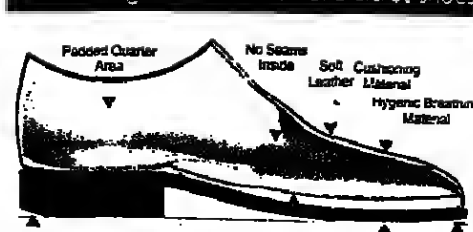
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UAE determined to cut foreign labour

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE), a key base for Asians and other foreign workers, said Saturday it was determined to slash its expatriate labour to find jobs for its nationals and ensure security.

The interior ministry said more than 172,000 expatriates, mostly South Asians, had left the wealthy Gulf country to take advantage of a four-month amnesty announced last year before the enforcement of tough immigration laws.

The ministry's under-secretary, Saqr Gobash, spoke to local newspapers after the publication of details of the new laws that introduced harsher penalties against violators and increased curbs on the recruitment of foreign workers.

"The issue of the new law is of vital importance to the country's present and future," Mr. Gobash told local newspapers.

"It is an indication of the country's determina-

tion and serious intention to achieve a balance in the demographic structure, restore stability to the labour market and curb infiltrations and their consequent security problems," he said.

More than two thirds of the UAE's population of 2.4 million are foreigners, who began to stream in after oil was discovered some three decades ago.

The UAE and other Gulf oil producers needed the expatriate workforce after they launched one of the biggest construction drives in modern history to build their infrastructure. The foreign influx was facilitated by the lack of skilled manpower in the region and social barriers against local women seeking work.

The new immigration law includes up to 15 years imprisonment and large fines against UAE employers who hire illegal aliens. Migrants who sneak into the UAE also face jail, fines and depor-

tation. The law asked all government offices Saturday to strictly comply with new immigration rules, including requirements needed by foreign residents to sponsor their families or hire housemaids. It also included new regulations governing labour needs for companies operating in the emirates.

"The new law allows all public and private institutions to get their needs of foreign labour through legal means that will achieve the interests of all without harming the UAE's security and stability or creating an unnecessary redundancy in the domestic labour market," Mr. Gobash said.

Labour and social affairs ministry officials said they had stepped up inspection of expatriate labour sites to ensure employers and employees respect the new laws and no workers are residing illegally.

They said the cam-

paigns were targeting mainly Asian labour concentrations as such expatriates accounted for the bulk of illegal migrants who were expelled last year. They include Indians, Pakistanis, Sri Lankans, Bangladeshis, Afghans, Iranians and Filipinos.

Security sources said Asians were still trying to sneak into the UAE by sea but added such attempts had sharply declined.

Around 500 illegal migrants have been seized this year compared with more than 2,000 in the first half of 1996. A total of nearly 25,000 Indians and other Asians have been captured while trying to enter the UAE illegally by sea from neighbouring Iran over the past two decades.

The UAE is one of the biggest oil producers and its per capita income of around \$16,500 in 1996 was among the highest in the world.

U.S. trade gap with Arab Gulf states widens

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The gap in U.S. trade with its main commercial partners in the Gulf jumped by more than nine times in the first half of 1997, mainly due to higher oil prices, official figures have showed.

The gap with the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states surged to around \$470 million in the

first half from nearly \$50 million in the same period of 1996, U.S. embassy figures showed.

GCC exports to the United States climbed to \$6.24 billion from \$5.62 billion in the same period.

Their imports, meanwhile, from the United States rose slightly to \$5.77 billion from \$5.57 billion, according to the

report published in Al Khaleej newspaper in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

U.S. embassy officials said the increase in Gulf exports to the American market was caused mainly by high oil prices as crude accounts for the bulk of those exports.

Oil prices averaged more than \$19 a barrel in the first half of 1997, one of their highest levels in nearly a decade.

The United States is a key importer of Gulf oil, receiving around two million barrels per day from the 16-year-old economic, political and defence alliance.

Washington is also the

second biggest single commercial partner of the GCC after Japan.

The figures showed Saudi Arabia, the world's oil superpower, remained Washington's top trading partner, with exports standing at \$4.8 billion in the first half compared with \$4.26 billion in the first half of 1996.

UAE exports to the United States also soared to \$592.6 million from \$262.2 million, while Kuwait's exports to its 1991 Gulf War ally declined to \$584.2 million from \$754.3 million.

There was also a drop in the exports by the remaining three GCC nations — Bahrain, Oman and Qatar.



Coca Cola Training Workshop

THE COCA COLA Company hosted a workshop for Coca Cola sales managers entitled "Supervising Route Distribution Effectiveness Workshop." This special seminar was the first ever Coca Cola Course to be conducted in Arabic and ran from the 1st to the 5th of September. Among the 26 participants were Coca Cola employees from Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and 15 participants from Coca Cola Jordan. The course was directed by Rafik Al Toukhi, Coca Cola Near East Operations Manager, and had a number of lecturers including Francois Mourad, the Training and Development Manager for Coca Cola Near East. When asked why the course was conducted in Jordan Mr. Mourad replied: "Jordan has always been of major importance to the Coca Cola Company, and it has made and continues to make major investments to improve the employees' skills in Jordan and the region in an effort to ensure the quality of its product and the service standards of the International Company."

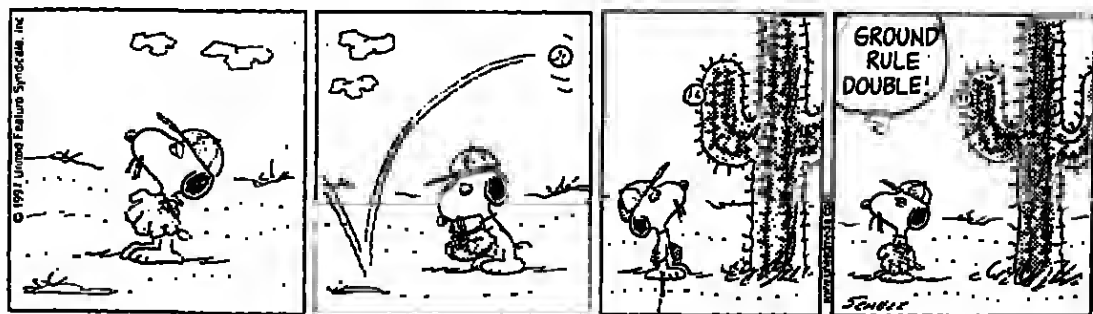
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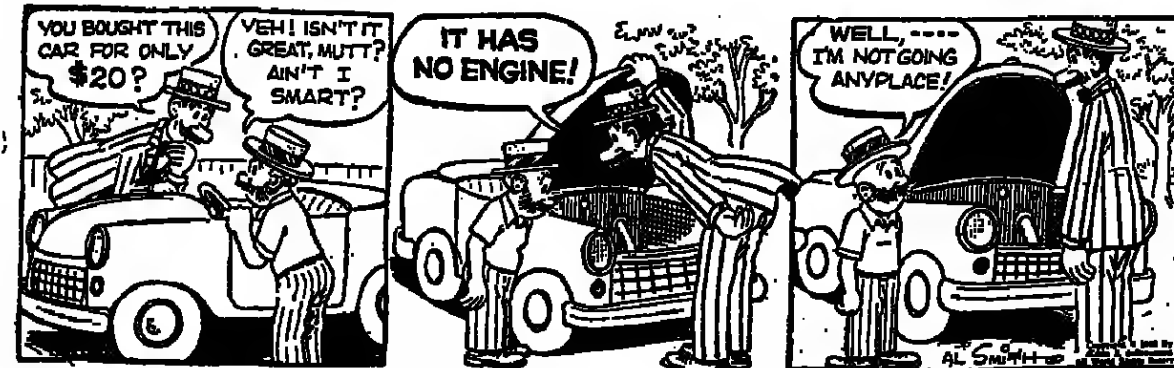
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Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY	CHF	ITL	FRF	ESP	FFP
US Dollar	1.0000	0.6375	0.6726	121.15	0.6557	1.3610	1.3610	2.0000	0.0045
DE Mark	0.6375	1.0000	0.8204	193.62	0.7936	1.9362	1.9362	3.3643	0.0045
GB Sterling	0.6726	0.8204	1.0000	166.07	0.7936	1.9362	1.9362	3.3643	0.0045
CH Franc	0.6557	0.7936	0.7936	155.94	1.0000	1.3610	1.3610	2.0000	0.0045
JP Yen	0.0083	0.0052	0.0060	1.0000	0.0083	0.0083	0.0083	0.0083	0.0083
CA Dollar	0.7241	0.4039	0.4039	106.54	0.7241	1.3610	1.3610	2.0000	0.0045
IT Lira	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	1.0000	0.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
NL Guilder	0.0020	0.0013	0.0013	20.36	0.0020	0.0020	0.0020	0.0020	0.0020
FR Franc	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	6.55	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001

Middle Eastern Currencies									
	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY	CHF	ITL	FRF	ESP	FFP
US Dollar	1.0000	0.6375	0.6726	121.15	0.6557	1.3610	1.3610	2.0000	0.0045
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	0.9060	0.9677	232.56	0.9060	1.9362	1.9362	3.3643	0.0045
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1688	0.1805	43.75	0.2666	0.5854	0.5854	1.0000	0.0045
Bahraini Dinar	0.2767	0.1766	0.1883	45.93	0.2767	0.6060	0.6060	1.0000	0.0045
Qatar Dinar	0.2767	0.1766	0.1883	45.93	0.2767	0.6060	0.6060	1.0000	0.0045
Kuwait Dinar	0.2767	0.1766	0.1883	45.93	0.2767	0.6060	0.6060	1.0000	0.0045
Emirates Dinar	0.2767	0.1766	0.1883	45.93	0.2767	0.6060	0.6060	1.0000	0.0045
Lebanese L1000	0.005	0.003	0.003	0.60	0.005	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011
Egyptian	0.0244	0.0156	0.0166	4.00	0.0244	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.053

Energy		USD	DEM	GBP	JPY
Brent	18.40	18.20	18.20	18.20	18.20
WTI	18.40	18.20	18.20	18.20	18.20
Bonny	18.40	18.20	18.20	18.20	18.20
Dubai	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25
UL Gas	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	200.00

Mid-East Currencies									
	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY	CHF	ITL	FRF	ESP	FFP
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.1688	0.1805	43.75	0.2666	0.5854	0.5854	1.0000	0.0045
AE Dirham	0.2722	0.1722	0.1841	45.00	0.2722	0.6000	0.6000	1.0000	0.0045
KW Dinar	0.2767	0.1766	0.1883	45.93	0.2767	0.6060	0.6060	1.0000	0.0045
BH Dinar	0.2767	0.1766	0.1883	45.93	0.2767	0.6060	0.6060	1.0000	0.0045
CY Pound	1.8754	1.2004	1.2789	312.72	1.8754	4.0625	4.0625	7.0000	0.0045

Metal Prices		USD	DEM	GBP	JPY
Gold (oz's)	322.3	322.3	322.3	322.3	322.3
Silver (oz's)	4.72	4.72	4.72	4.72	4.72
Platinum (oz's)	418.4	420.4	420.4	420.4	420.4
Al (3 Months)	1.007	1.010	1.010	1.010	1.010
CU (3 Months)	2.161	2.166	2.166	2.166	2.166
Zinc (3 Months)	1.480	1.484	1.484	1.484	1.484
Lead (3 Months)	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48
Ni (3 Months)	0.680	0.672	0.672	0.672	0.672

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)									
	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY	CHF	ITL	FRF	ESP	FFP
USD	5.53	5.59	5.71	5.84	5.93				
GBP	7.06	7.18	7.31	7.43	7.56				
JPY	0.45	0.45	0.46	0.46	0.46				
DEM	3.09	3.19	3.34	3.45	3.50				
FRF	3.22	3.30	3.39	3.50	3.60				
CHF	1.25	1.37	1.48	1.58	1.68				
ITL	6.78	6.72	6.59	6.45	6.36				

Main Equity Indices									
	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY	CHF	ITL	FRF	ESP	FFP
New York	7022.41	44.83	45.7	7942.3	7785.9	7867.2			
S&P 500	329.05	1.82	1.82	340.37	334.05	330.87			
Nikkei	1494.2	2.9	0.06	5028.3	4984.3	4981.3			
FTSE 100	4994.2	2.9	0.06	5028.3	4984.3	4981.3			
DAX	2824.51	2.48	0.08	2906	2918	2927			
Frankfurt	2106.67	28.85	0.71	4103.3	4088.2	4071.7			

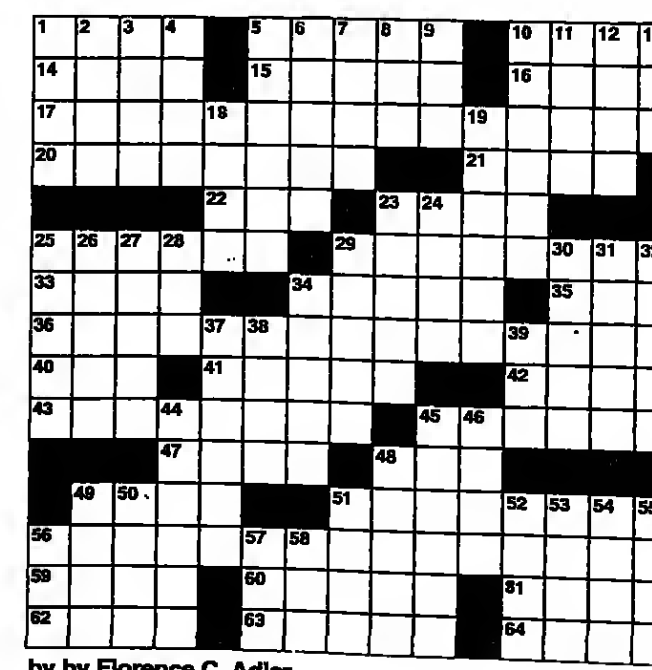
Energy		USD	DEM	GBP	JPY
Crude (bbl)	205.67	Spot	Spot	Spot	Spot
Coals (bbl)	1708	Spot	Spot	Spot	Spot
Sugar (bbl)	333	Spot	Spot	Spot	Spot
Wheat (bbl)	141	Spot	Spot	Spot	Spot
Soya (bbl)	22.25	Spot	Spot	Spot	Spot
Tea (bbl)	156	Spot	Spot	Spot	Spot
Bees (bbl)	0	Spot	Spot	Spot	Spot
Rice (bbl)	430	Spot	Spot	Spot	Spot

JOD Cross Rates									
	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY	CHF	ITL	FRF	ESP	FFP
US Dollar	0.708	0.710							
GB Sterling	1.267	1.1323							
DE Mark	0.3922	0.3942							
CH Franc	0.3784	0.4006							
FR Franc	0.1168	0.1172							
JP Yen	0.5837	0.5898							
NL Guilder	0.3484	0.3501							
IT Lira	0.4022	0.4042							

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS
- Papal vestments
 - Pentateuch
 - Map
 - Ashen
 - "...get her poor dog"
 - Perpetuating to flying
 - From time to time
 - Surgeon
 - Blunders
 - Soldiers
 - Flord city
 - Cossack chief
 - Grandeur
 - Shoe part
 - White as a
 - Crude mineral
 - English conductor and pianist
 - Ogle
 - Gangsters
 - Season of fasting
 - Certain investment plans
 - Operatic singers
 - Tankard drinks
 - Moray
 - Bunyen
 - Assign
 - "The Song of Hiawatha" poet
 - Words by Caesar
 - Lend — (pay attention)
 - Italian city
 - Vegetable dish
 - Wedding present?
 - Enemies



by Florence C. Adler

- DOWN
- Copies
 - Molten rock
 - Tootled
 - Certain European
 - Dyeing substance
 - Certain instruments
 - Fracases
 - Collection of miscellany
 - Layer
 - Customer
 - Type of oven
 - God of war
 - Weight
 - System of exercises
 - Erase
 - Unfolds
 - Travels
 - Property
 - City once called Edo
 - Foreigner
 - Converted
 - Shelters
 - Gives medicine to
 - Maine city
 - Leis
 - Pumps
 - Raw
 - Sharpen
 - Literary monogram
 - Zodiac sign
 - Steeple part
 - Medicinal plant
 - English composer
 - Fountain
 - Rectangular pilaster
 - Again
 - Musical symbol
 - Too
 - Haul
 - Cote creatures
 - Wise
 - Fellow
 - Yoko —



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HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 7, 1997

By Thomas S. P. Astrologer, Copyright, Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Today you have the opportunity to see a clearer picture of the conditions around you, or in politics. Be patient with others and you can eliminate any difficulties which could occur in the days ahead.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Get a new perspective, through those you trust today, on how to handle anxieties at home and at career activities. Turn concerns into advantages by making the effort to meet with experts who have the ability to bring you success.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Listen to a fellow associate who bluntly, however, honestly can give you excellent insight into your relationships. Later this evening will be a good time to meet with fellow associates and devise a plan of action for a new project.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Relax today and do not think about career activities. Avoid those who wish to manipulate your thinking. Write to a loved one far away and tell him or her that you miss having them around with you at this time.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Contact a fascinating new acquaintance and learn from this person. If you use your charm at a social affair today, you can save a valuable friendship by doing something special for this person and show that you appreciate them.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Take advantage of an opportunity to improve your standing with your community. Budget your money carefully, thereby you will have extra funds ahead in case of an emergency which could materialize.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A charming new contact emerges today, to whom it is best to be polite and kind. Pay attention to different philosophies of business activities and make the right decision for being quite successful.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You should not permit a foolish disagreement to separate you from the one you love, so control your temper. Catch up on your rest later this evening, thereby you will be refreshed to handle the hectic next few days.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You should not let the difficulties of others interfere with your affection for them. Resist the urge to criticize them or you could create a difficult situation. Be careful with new proposals for a new project.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Study what you can do to assist a friend in trouble. Show that you are being understanding, not merely charitable.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Tour agents demand government intervention to stop companies from raising tourist transport fares

**** THE ASSOCIATION** of travel and tour agents has asked the government to intervene to stop the coalition of tourist transport companies from raising fares by 30 per cent from Sept. 16, 1997. The tour agents threatened that they will be forced to ask their counterparts abroad to decline accepting any reservations for tourist groups because Jordanian tourism companies cannot take the financial loss resulting from higher fares.

According to Lami'e Haddadin, the association's president, the decision of the tourist transport companies to increase the fares will hurt the Jordanian tourism and national economy.

The association rejected the request of the three transport companies to postpone their reply to the tour agents until today (Sunday) due to lack of time. They said that the period remaining to implement the decision is too close and that tour agents in the Kingdom and abroad do not have the time required to study the new fares and to compare them with neighbouring countries.

The consequences of forming the coalition and raising the fares were discussed before between the association and the companies which were given specific demands to cancel the decision. The companies promised to reply to the demands on Thursday but later requested more time until Sunday. The association is now asking the government to intervene to cancel the decision of the coalition on the grounds that it forms a monopoly. They are also requesting that tourist transport charges remain unchanged until the end of 1998.

The association is also demanding that the government reconsider the specialised tourist transport law and all our tourism offices and companies to own tourist buses just like other countries and, especially, neighbouring states. (A) Ra'i.

Businessmen urge government to lower land transport charges between Aqaba and Baghdad

**** PRIVATE SECTOR** businessmen have sent a memorandum to the prime minister demanding quick measures to lower land transport charges from Aqaba to Iraq. They demanded that charges be reduced from \$6 per tonne to \$4 per tonne for bulk wheat and other bagged products, such as rice and sugar, in order to compete with Syrian ports in supplying Iraq with food.

The memorandum explained that the requested reduction is to compensate the transit fees for passing through the Suez Canal as vessels crossing the waterway do not pay any fees if the port of discharge is on the Mediterranean Sea. "As Iraq is now asking for prices for goods to be delivered either through Aqaba or Tartous, the choice is left to international companies which should be convinced to continue providing the goods through Aqaba," the businessmen said.

The memorandum urged an expedited study to lower the land transport charges before suppliers start shipping around 250,000 tonnes of wheat to Iraq during September, October and November of this year in order to ensure that the port of discharge will be Aqaba (A) Ra'i.

Jordan awards first GDR mandate for potash firm to Nomura

By Suleiman Al Khalidi

Arab Potash Company, told Reuters.

Mr. Saddoun said the decision had been approved by a recent meeting of the 15-member board of the firm. He expected the issue would be launched in capital markets by year-end.

Arab Potash's majority shareholder is Jordan's state investment arm while minority holdings are held by Arab governments including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya and Iraq.

Investment banking sources say the firms which had submitted offers apart from Nomura were HSBC Investment Bank, ING Barings, Union Bank of Switzerland, Paribas, Merrill Lynch and Flemings.

Arab Potash's offering has seen tough competition from global bankers anxious to get the first deal out of Jordan and improve their standing in the league tables, bankers say.

The firm had asked the banks last July to submit proposals of the offering to include their track records in the Middle East and their proposed pricing range of the GDR offering.

"As for the factors we put in the evaluation the rest of the banks were close but Nomura was the best," Mr. Saddoun said.

The GDR offering, the first such issue by a Jordanian firm to tap the international equity market, would raise the company's international profile and allow other Jordanian bluechips in future to tap cheaper credit for ambitious expansion projects.

The GDR offering follows recent progress in launching the country's first corporate bond issue issued by Jordan Phosphate Mines and a \$100 million debut sovereign Eurobond still in the works, part of accelerated efforts to attract more foreign investment in the Kingdom.

Mr. Saddoun said the GDR issue was presently a \$35 million GDR issue, putting on offer 3.62 million shares left unsubscribed from an earlier public issue.

But it could be raised significantly higher if the government decides to add a portion of a 55.4 per cent government stake in the firm, he added.

"We hope if the government agrees to bring its stocks into the GDR issue," Mr. Saddoun said.

Bankers say a larger GDR issue would help make the issue more liquid by providing wider global investor exposure and raise more financing for the company's ambitious projects.

Arab Potash, whose authorised capital is \$3.3 million dinars, has currently a 79.7 million dinar paid up capital and has ambitious plans to develop its downstream industry.

"These funds we need to use for our expansion projects," Mr. Saddoun said.

Arab Potash plans to raise production potash capacity to 2.2 million tonnes annually by 2002 from a current 1.8 million tonnes. It has a few multi-million projects underway including one with Israel to exploit the Jordanian side of the Dead Sea.

Iran carpet exports taking off again after slump

TEHRAN (R) — Iran's luxury carpet export industry is slowly recovering from a two-year slump after new rules allowed exporters to maximise foreign currency earnings.

Leading exporters said the value and volume of hand-woven and machine-made carpet sales to the main European, Arab Gulf and Canadian consumer markets were on the rise.

The rebound, if sustained, would be a major boost for Iran's non-oil economy as the industry is the country's main foreign exchange earner after the annual \$18 billion in oil revenue.

"Exports are rising because of the new export rules... we hope this is the beginning of the revival for Iranian carpets," Akbar Heristchian, president of the 420-member Iranian Carpet Exporters Association told Reuters.

In the last two months carpet exporters have been able to capitalise on new currency regulations that allow them to exchange their hard currency at preferential rates.

The exporters can now deposit their foreign currency earnings with the central bank which will issue them a trade certificate which they can then take to Tehran's stock exchange.

At the stock exchange they can use the certificate to get some 4,700 Iranian rials to the U.S. dollar, versus the official "export rate" of 3,000 rials and the government's own rate of 1,700, the traders said.

The 4,700 rate can usually be obtained only from Tehran's illegal street currency traders.

In 1995, carpet exporters were forced to deposit all their currency with the central bank at the rate of 3,000 rials, leading to a drastic drop in official exports as firms saw little or no incentive in going through the central bank.

Carpet exporters can also import items from a list of 29 goods against their hard currency allocation, an attractive option given constantly rising prices for sought-after consumer goods in Iran.

"Now with the easing of regulations exports are on the rise. For the past four months there is a sign of increase," said Nosrattollah Mahmoudzadeh, director of Asil Carpet Co.

Exports of hand-woven carpets earned Iran \$130 million in the first three months of the Iranian year which began March 21. 21 per cent higher than the same period the previous year, according to government figures.

Government officials are targeting \$700 million to \$800 million in sales this year, versus \$602 million in the last Iranian year which was 35 per cent down from the previous year.

Iranian carpets typically fetch anywhere between 200,000 rials to 50 million rials in overseas markets, traders said.

"We faced a crisis because of the constant changing in the regulations but in the last two months it has recovered," said one exporter who said his sales had grown between 10-20 per cent.

Despite the upturn, Iranian exporters will still struggle to recapture market share lost to other weavers particularly in India, Turkey and China.

Managers also admit that they will have to improve their marketing techniques and modify designs to better meet the changing tastes of key European buyers.

The problem is that the Iranian carpet did not defend itself in the European market. Many Europeans cannot tell the difference whether a carpet is made in Iran, India or China. It is a problem of marketing," said Mr. Mahmoudzadeh.

While in the mid-1970s Iran had more than a 50 per cent share in the world carpet market, this share had now fallen by half, a worrying development for the 2.5 million people directly involved in the industry.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET												
HOUSING BANK CENTER, AMMAN - JORDAN												
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 06/09/1997												
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRANSA.	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE		
336,000	238,500	ARAB BANK	15.3	1.20	77	2440	611050	326.00	333.00	7.00+		
N 2.340	1.680	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	8	0.00	15	290139	568816	1.96	1.97	0.01+		
3,600	3,760	BANK OF JORDAN	6.4	0.00	3	800	1535	3.06	3.06	-		
1,210	890	MIG. EAST INV. BK.	60.4	0.00	5	1500	1388	9.2	9.3	-		
4,550	4,550	THE HOUSING BK.	14.0	0.00	5	3325	15793	4.78	4.78	0.00		
4,180	2,440	JOR. KUWAIT BANK	11.6	0.00	8	3000	6607	3.38	3.38	-		
1,050	760	JOR. GULF BANK	4.6	9.09	11	90614	39020	7.6	7.7	0.1+		
4,050	3,520	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	16.3	17	3225	17	3906	15547	3.98	4.00	0.02+	
3,800	3,080	JOR. INV. FUND BANK	21.9	0.00	11	36200	123075	3.41	3.40	-0.01-		
2,360	970	RETAIL AL-HAL (RETIRED)	6	15.46	2	100	97	9.8	9.7	-0.01-		
1,440	850	RETAIL BANK, INV. BK.	9	0.00	9	68000	62560	0.92	0.93	-		
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 238.38 %CHG: +1.70 163 458724 1645486												
3,310	1,590	JOR. FRENCH INVR.	5.0	8.43	7	7000	12336	1.79	1.78	-0.01-		
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 114.95 %CHG: -0.05 7 7000 12336												
1,820	1,550	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.2	5.88	87	98539	167778	1.68	1.70	0.02+		
7,500	6,000	VEHIC. OWNERS FND.	7.9	4.83	2	3000	14500	7.50	7.35	-0.15-		
3,050	3,280	SHIPPING LINES	16.3	4.64	15	123650	346230	2.82	3.80	0.98+		
1,550	930	NATL. POSTAL	5.6	0.00	30	31140	3086	1.43	1.45	0.02+		
3,730	2,890	ARAB INTL. INV. FUND	8.7	0.00	7	40200	134672	3.36	3.35	-0.01-		
1,220	930	ZARQA EDUCATION	9	0.00	8	5200	5414	1.05	1.04	-0.01-		
2,230	1,630	UNIFIED CO.	8.2	6.36	3	750	1296	1.73	1.73	-		
1,010	640	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	1	400	296	0.75	0.74	-0.01-		
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 110.86 %CHG: +0.04 152 291879 760764												
1,100	930	ATTANQUEE	9	0.00	1	600	576	1.00	0.96	-0.04-		
4,450	3,220	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	36.1	3.84	35	61269	239099	3.89	3.88	-0.01-		
4,140	2,930	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	10.7	2.60	1	250	963	3.80	3.85	0.05+		
10,480	9,070	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.2	8.43	28	1284	13465	10.45	10.55	0.10+		
7,200	4,500	JORDAN TRADING	5.6	0.00	1	300	1380	4.60	4.60	-		
3,360	1,630	INDUSTRIAL COM. INC.	9	0.00	3	180	306	1.71	1.71	-		
7,150	5,800	JOR. WAREHOUSE	10.2	3.15	31	11000	6885	6.15	6.35	0.20+		
4,350	3,040	ARAB FRANCH. MNG.	12.0	4.99	31	21281	92784	4.31	4.36	0.05+		
2,870	2,100	JORDAN RENT	9.7	4.30	3	1200	3063	2.53	2.58	0.05+		
5,650	4,300	DAR ALDARA INV. FUND	13.6	4.50	9	2278	12636	5.53	5.55	0.02+		
3,650	3,220	ARAB ALUM. IND.	5.4	10.82	31	750	1721	3.38	3.31	-0.07-		
9,960	4,500	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	10.2	0.00	31	47000	2244	4.7	4.8	0.10+		
1,290	1,000	ARAB PAPER CORP. LTD.	32.1	0.00	9	4050	4293	1.08	1.05	-0.03-		
770	510	NATIONAL INDS.	9	0.00	4	3000	1650	0.56	0.55	-0.01-		
1,200	510	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	24	16700	9743	0.58	0.58	-		
940	530	JOR. ROYALTY TRD.	9	0.00	4	2250	1445	0.64	0.64	-		
930	530	JOR. SULPHUR CHEM.	0	0.00	2	750	465	0.62	0.62	-		
1,670	1,120	ARAB FRANCH. CHEM.	17.4	5.15	34	11000	15159	1.37	1.36	-0.01-		
1,880	1,080	UNIV. WOOD INDS.	9	0.00	5	1950	2509	1.28	1.28	-		
1,510	910	JOR. INDS. RESOURCES	13.4	10.87	14	4600	4213	0.93	0.93	-		
1,620	1,300	NATL. CHEMICAL	14.9	4.43	20	58350	89131	1.53	1.58	0.05+		
1,070	810	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	15.8	0.00	6	16600	14271	0.86	0.86	-		
2,090	1,340	EL. & CABLE READY WEAR	56.3	0.00	14	4594	7355	1.61	1.60	-0.01-		
1,330	1,080	INTEL. TOBACCO	6.5	0.00	11	18200	31628	1.20	1.18	-0.02-		
1,160	860	UNION CH. & VEG.	51.4	0.00	5	5450	6159	1.13	1.13	-		
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 131.90 %CHG: +0.26 279 285066 573407												
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 174.45 %CHG: +1.07 601 1043589 3831994												
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 06/09/1997												
710	410	HACH. SOP. FERT. IND.	9	0.00	1	1000	500	0.50	0.50	-		
630	340	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	9	0.00	1	10000	3600	0.36	0.36	-0.01-		
650	390	JOR. TRADE FND.	10.4	0.00	14	15750	30143	4.40	4.39	-0.01-		
N 950	540	JOR. FID. INV. CO.	9	0.00	57	106650	65801	6.00	6.02	0.02+		
840	560	UNION INV. FND.	9	0.00	30	53550	12319	0.73	0.74	0.01+		
N 570	370	ARAB FID. INVEST.	72.9	0.00	17	38500	12154	0.39	0.39	-		
N 950	610	AL-DIMARTAL 75%	72.9	0.00	17	38500	612	0.37	0.37	-		
730	490	ARAB FOOD & MED.	9	0.00	7	4500	2250	0.50	0.50	-		
570	380	ARAB INTL. INV. FUND	44.9	0.00	5	3000	1170	0.39	0.39	-		
N 750	400	NATL. WOOD IND. JORDAN	9	0.00	11	7500	3375	0.45	0.45	-		
960	890	READY MIX CONCRETE	10.7	0.00	1	10000	8900	0.89	0.89	-		
820	710	JORDAN STEEL	34.4	6.58	3	2250	1710	0.76	0.76	-		
580	460	ARAB ELECT. INDS.	9	0.00	2	2000	960	0.48	0.48	-		
710	580	MIDWEST PETRO. 75%	9	0.00	7	11000	4400	0.44	0.44	-0.01-		
1,190	660	UNION TOBACCO 75%	9	0.00	3	3050	1851	1.16	1.14	-0.02-		
730	550	RAZI PHARM. 85%	9	0.00	14	17800	9668	0.73	0.69	-0.04-		
N 570	250	IND. INVS.	9	0.00	8	8450	2620	0.31	0.31	-		
860	700	IND. TOBACCO	18.4	0.00	3	7000	3125	0.70	0.70	-		
N 1,000	700	NAT. ALUMINUM 75%	98.8	0.00	8	3400	1564	0.71	0.71	-		
N 860	590	MIG. EAST COMPLEX	7.4	16.67	1	900	540	0.60	0.60	-		
3,750	3,420	ARAB STEEL PIPES	28.4	2.86	1	7500	36250	3.50	3.50	-		
GRAND TOTAL 206 311045 173029												

Chang faces moment of truth against Rafter in semis

Athenians greet IOC's 2004 Olympic vote, sorrow for losers

PARIS (AFP) — Residents of Athens danced in the streets of the Greek capital Friday, celebrating the decision to award their city the 2004 Olympic Games.

Thousands gathered and children and youths waved flags and balloons in Olympic colours in front of the Zappion Palace in the downtown city area and motorists hit their horns to salute the victory.

Many in the streets chanted: "Hellas, Hellas (Greece, Greece)."

The celebrations began just seconds after the announcement by International Olympic Committee president Juan Antonio Samaranch in Lausanne, Switzerland, which was televised live by Greek television networks.

Rome, Cape Town, Buenos Aires and Stockholm were the other candidates to host the Games.

Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis said Athens' victory was a great opportunity for Greece to reinforce its international position and improve its economy.

"The Olympics Games present us with a great opportunity... and to create friendships with all the countries in the world."

"For us it is a chance to make a fresh start and to promote our culture."

Athens residents of all political persuasions joined in the celebrations.

"It is certainly a magnificent moment. It is a great opportunity for Greece," said Dora Bakoyannis, a leading conservative politician.

Athens polled 66 votes to 41 for Rome in the final round of voting in Lausanne on Friday. Buenos Aires was eliminated after the first round, Stockholm in the second and Cape Town in the third.

The losing candidates accepted defeat with a mixture of grace and deep disappointment.

Romans were left in tears and disappointment.

The Piazza Navona square in central Rome had been packed with people waiting to celebrate victory after following the IOC's proceedings in Lausanne on a giant television screen.

But there were tears and even a few whistles of disapproval when Samaranch announced the Greek victory. Few people stayed to watch the dance troupe performing for the occasion and the square soon emptied.

Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi sent a message of congratulations to his opposite number in Greece, Costas Simitis.

"In the name of the Italian Government and of my country, I would like to express my warmest congratulations to Athens, after a vigorous and fair competition, for being chosen to host the 2004 Olympics," he said.

There was an equally sporting gesture from the



Young Athenians celebrate after Athens was awarded the 2004 Olympic games by the International Olympic Committee. A crowd of thousands of Athenians reacted with jubilation on Friday to news Athens would host the 2004 summer games (Reuters photo)



Disappointed crowds watch as the Cape Town's 2004 Olympic bid fails to edge out Athens. Cape Town was one of five candidate cities in the race to host the Games, along with Stockholm, Buenos Aires, Athens and Rome (Reuters photo)

Greek ambassador here, Alexandros Sandis, who said: "I hope with all my heart that Rome hosts the Olympics in 2008."

"I don't want to call it a victory — it wasn't a battle, it was just a presentation of five cities and the IOC chose Athens."

However, there was triumph for the Greeks and other members of the anti-Olympic campaign here.

Guido Pollice, head of the Green lobby, said: "Now we hope that we can have a constructive dialogue with the mayor of Rome, and that all the effort that went into trying to get the Olympics will go into developing Rome for 2000."

Speaking from Abidjan, President Nelson Mandela of South Africa was philosophical about Cape Town's failure.

"The cities that are bidding have excellent credentials for doing so and we think Athens deserved

it and we congratulate them," said Mandela, en route between Lausanne and South Africa.

A long sigh of disappointment rose from a crowd of more than 40,000 partygoers in Cape Town as they watched the announcement on a big-screen television.

"It's not fair," said hystander Adri Miller. "Athens failed in the athletics championships this summer. We could have done better."

Other Cape Town supporters said the loss proved that the world was not ready to treat Africans on an equal footing.

A Cape Town city official said: "The last ring — the black ring — of the Olympic logo — has not been brought home to Africa, and the Olympic spirit and the Olympic family of nations remains incomplete," he said.

Tens of thousands of

Swedes at Stockholm's old Olympic Stadium and the Kungstraedgaarden park greeted the news in disappointed silence.

Crowds streamed out of the packed stadium and park under overcast skies with heads howed immediately after the announcement in Lausanne.

Swedish Prime Minister Goeran Persson, speaking from Lausanne, congratulated the Greek capital.

"Congratulations to Athens and thank you to those who worked for Stockholm," he said, admitting that he was disappointed.

"Yes, I am, because the atmosphere in Lausanne this morning was such that I thought we had a good chance," he said.

Sweden's King Carl XVI Gustaf, a keen sportsman, said he was "sorry that the athletes would not have the chance to use the fine Swedish arenas."

"Despite the, for Stockholm, disheartening announcement from Lausanne, the efforts have not been wasted. Instead, they have given great results in terms of extensive positive coverage of Stockholm and Sweden," the royal said.

But one Swedish woman who supported the Swedish Association against the Olympics demanded to see a financial review "of what this spectacle has cost us."

Argentine President Carlos Menem announced that Buenos Aires is in the running for the 2008 Games.

In remarks to Argentine reporters in the Swiss city of Lausanne broadcast here, Menem said the International Olympic Committee's vote for Athens was "not a defeat" for Argentina, which had sought to host the games.

Menem said he had "immediately" instructed Tourism Minister Francisco Mayorga and Sports Minister Hugo Porta to begin working on a campaign to bring the 2008 Summer Olympic Games to Argentina.

Premier League's 5th week kicks off today

National team prepares for Libya tourney

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — While the Jordan Soccer Federation (JSF) had scheduled the Premier League competition earlier than usual this season with the hope of an uninterrupted agenda, the matches were delayed because of the Pan-Arab Games in July and will now be postponed again until the national team ends international competitions.

The ten teams will play the fifth week of the event starting today and the matches will then resume Sept. 28.

The national team will be busy with two tournaments in Libya and Iraq amid the JSF's efforts to maintain continuity for the team and provide match experience following their gold medal win at the Pan-Arab Games.

The tournament in Libya kicks off Sept. 16 with the teams of Turkey, Malaysia, Cyprus, Libya and Jordan taking part.

While the national team upgrade their preparations, the Premier League clubs seek to preserve either their top places or struggle to improve their form in the case of the bottom-placed teams.

The fifth week will see the clash of the current top-two Al Ramtha and Al Wihdat who top the standings with 10 points each and are the only unbeaten teams in the league so far.

During the past week, Al Faisali suffered their first defeat 2-1 at the hands of reigning champs Al Wihdat in a postponed match. Al Hussein also suffered their first loss 3-1 to Al Ramtha.

Other teams scored big wins such as Al Ahli's 8-2 win over Al Karmel and Al Faisali's 8-1 win over Al Baqaa. Al Wihdat beat Shabab Al Hussein 2-0 and Al Jazireh and Al Qadissieh drew 1-1.

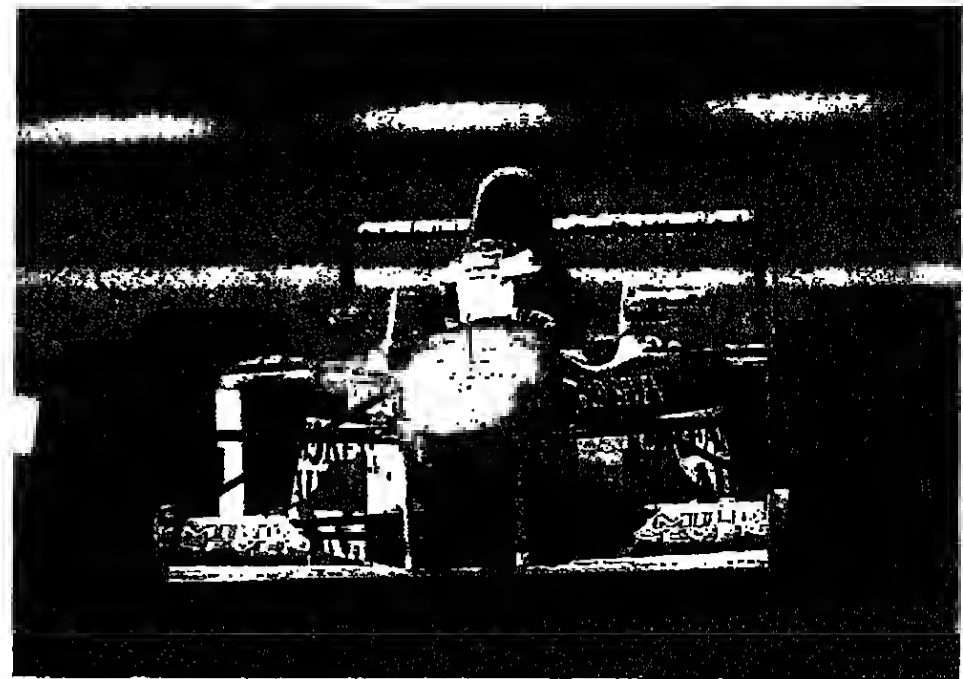
STANDINGS

Team	P	W	D	L	Gf	Ga	Pts
Ramtha	4	3	1	0	7	1	10
Wihdat	4	3	1	0	6	2	10
Faisali	4	2	1	1	16	7	7
Ahli	4	2	1	1	12	6	7
Jazireh	4	2	1	1	6	3	7
Hussein	4	2	1	1	5	5	7
Qadissieh	4	1	1	2	4	8	4
Baqaa	4	1	0	3	6	12	3
Karmel	4	0	1	3	2	13	1
S.Hussein	4	0	0	4	0	7	0

GP drivers pay tribute to Diana

MONZA (AFP) — The world of Grand Prix motor racing, led by reigning world champion Damon Hill of Britain, paid its homage to Diana, Princess of Wales, with one minute of silence at the Monza circuit Saturday.

British and other drivers and team members gathered around Hill in the pit lane, or stood in silence outside their own pits, at 1200 (1000 GMT), the moment



French Benetton driver Jean Alesi drives during the official practice of the Italian Grand Prix in Monza, September 6. Alesi recorded a time of 1:22.990 and he took the pole position (Reuters photo)

funeral services started in London.

The huge crowd gathered for the afternoon's

qualifying session for Sunday's Italian Grand Prix applauded when an announcer asked them to

observe the minute's silence, and many stood, applauding again when the tribute ended.

Helissio takes on best milers in Arc trial

PARIS (AFP) — Helissio, the 1996 European racehorse of the year, takes on the best of the European milers here at Longchamp racecourse on Sunday in his last race before bidding to become the first horse in 20 years to win successive Arc de Triomphe races.

The four-year-old colt, who will emulate the Irish trained Alleged (1977-78) should be prevail on October 7, is taking an unorthodox route to the mile-and-a-half event by running over the shorter mile distance — a practice rarely employed in Europe though much used in Australia.

His Tunisian-born trainer Elic Lellouche has always wanted to try him over shorter distances and this presents the perfect opportunity with a month to the big day.

The strapping front running horse would lose little in defeat and the race would probably sharpen him up for the Arc plus he will have former regular partner Olivier Peslier back on board.

Peslier, who was taken off him for his ill-fated trip to England for the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes, will ride because his retainer Daniel Wildenstein does not have a runner and his partner from Ascot Cash Asmussen is claimed for Spinning World.

Peslier, a former champi-

on pony rider, said that he would have won on Helissio at Ascot where Asmussen rode a strange race bringing him to the front and then withdrawing him. In the end he was hard pressed to finish third.

Some defended Asmussen by saying the torrential downpour had changed the going and he had no option but to ride a different race so Helissio's doubtful stamina would not be exploited.

Whatever the judgement it is clear that Peslier understands Helissio the best and many will be praying that he can ride him in the Arc.

Helissio, owned by Spanish businessman Enrique Sarasola, will have his work cut out to see off a classy field of milers here which includes five Group One winners.

Spinning World, owned by the Niarcho family and trained by Chantilly-based Englishman Jonathan Pease, won his second successive Prix Jacques Le Marois in Deauville in August and will be aided by the same pacemaker again in Poper.

However, it is by no means a two horse race as

Classic winners Classic Park from Ireland, trained by Irishman Aidan O'Brien, and Daylami, the Aga Khan owned French 2000 Guineas winner, are also slated to start.

Daylami, who failed like Spinning World at Ascot in June, has ground to make up on the Niarcho horse having gone down to an easily-held two-length defeat in the Le Marois.

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EXAMINATIONS

The British Council would like to announce that entries for the University of London GCE January 1998 session and the University of Cambridge IGCSE/GCE November 1997 session will be accepted from Monday 8 September to Thursday 11 September 1997.

We encourage candidates to register during this period to avoid payment of the late entry fee.

Registration time: 09:30 am to 12:30 pm

Candidates are required to bring with them a recent photo, an official identification and a passport photograph.

Please ask for Miss Diana Muasher

Registered in England as a charity No. 209131

World Gymnastics Championships

Khorkina, Ivankov win all-around titles

LAUSANNE (AFP) — Svetlana Khorkina of Russia produced a faultless uneven bars routine in the final rotation to capture the gold medal in the women's all-around event at the World Gymnastics Championships on Friday.

Khorkina, who won the silver medal in the all-around at the world championships in Sabae, Japan, in 1995, scored 38.636 points.

She finished ahead of Romanian Simona Amanar, who had 38.587 points, and fellow Russian Elena Produnova, who was third with 38.549 points.

Khorkina, the pre-event favourite, was not her usual precise self on the first three apparatus.

A poor beam performance left her sixth before she recovered her customary excellence on the floor to move to the head of the field.

However, the 1.64m-tall 18-year-old then failed to nail her two efforts on the vault, falling to fourth place behind leader Amanar, Romania's Gina Gogean and Produnova.

The scene was set for the tensest of finales, with Khorkina on her favourite apparatus, the uneven bars, and Amanar on the vault.

The Romanian was immaculate, leaving Khorkina to score over 9.801 on the uneven bars to overtake her.

The clear crowd favourite, Khorkina completed her routine and held her breath as the judges delivered the verdict. Scores ranging from 9.900 to 9.750 saw her home with something to spare and she wept tears of joy.

It was a deserved triumph for the Russian, who finished only 13th in Atlanta after winning world silver in Japan in 1995.

Amanar too could be content with improving on her fourth place in 1995 and third in Atlanta.

In the men's all-around, Belarussian Ivan Ivankov emerged victorious three years after winning his first world title in Brisbane, Australia.

Ivankov, who has endured two years of Achilles tendon trouble, scored 56.887 points, to finish ahead of Russian Alexei Bondarenko (56.061) and Japan's Naoya Tuskahara (56.023).

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Israel questions high price of keeping troops in Lebanon

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — As Israel mourns the death of 12 of its finest soldiers in a botched raid deep in south Lebanon, the country Saturday once again questioned whether the time has come to pull its troops out of Lebanon.

Even hardline Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon, a former defence minister and die-hard hawk, suggested that a withdrawal from the self-declared "security zone" Israel has occupied in south Lebanon since 1985 is now an option.

The zone was set up to protect Israel's northern border from attacks by guerrillas from groups such as Hizbollah, but Mr. Sharon hinted such attacks may now be a price worth paying.

"If we had the choice of a deal with Syria, which would make us hostages to Hizbollah, and a unilateral retreat from Lebanon, the second option would be preferable," said Mr. Sharon.

But Mr. Sharon, who as defence minister in 1982 initiated the invasion of south Lebanon that lasted for three years and cost 750 Israeli lives, said the only short-term option was "to endure the low-level war in south Lebanon" and that to accept it would have a price.

This year alone, 30 Israeli soldiers have died in combat in south Lebanon, while another 73 died in a helicopter crash in northern Israel while on their way to the "security zone."

Prominent opposition Labour Deputy Yossi Beilin said the grim toll called for a unilateral retreat from Lebanon, adding that the majority of Israel's army commanders were in favour of such a move.

Labour leader Ehud Barak, a former army chief of staff, has already floated the idea of a staggered withdrawal from Lebanon — with a multinational force ensuring the security of Israel's northern border.

According to a public television poll taken Friday of 415 Israeli-Jews, 52 per cent said they wanted all Israeli soldiers, while 34 per cent oppose such a move and 14 per cent did not respond.

For many Israelis the "dirty war" in south Lebanon has echoes of the Washington's painful involvement in Vietnam, but Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu Friday dismissed the parallels.

"South Lebanon is not Vietnam, which is thousands of kilometres from the United States. South Lebanon adjoins our northern border and we cannot take the risk of exposing our communities in Galilee to terrorism," he said.

Beilin founds group to promote Lebanon pullout

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israeli opposition leader Yossi Beilin announced Saturday that he has started a group in favour of a unilateral Israeli withdrawal from self-declared Israeli "security zone" in south Lebanon.

"I have created the Movement for the Withdrawal in Peace from Lebanon," the Labour Party member of parliament said in a statement.

He said he intended to rally to his cause "the maximum possible number of Israelis, independent of their affiliations or political sympathies."

The announcement comes the day after a bungled military raid south of Sidon, Lebanon, in which 12 elite Israeli soldiers died.

At the beginning of the year Mr. Netanyahu floated the idea of a "Lebanon-first" deal, whereby Israel and Syria — which has 35,000 troops in Lebanon — would both withdraw their soldiers as the first stage of a peace treaty.

Mr. Netanyahu hoped the proposal would kickstart stalled Israeli-Syrian peace negotiations, on ice since February 1996, but Damascus rejected the offer out of hand.

Syria holds huge influence over Lebanon, and has always insisted the two countries must sign a joint and comprehensive peace treaty with Israel.

Meanwhile, Israel sees Syria as controlling the war in south Lebanon by funneling weapons supplied by Iran to Hizbollah which spearheads resistance to Israel's occupation of the buffer strip.

The elite Israeli commando unit was ambushed in the early hours of Friday as it targeted guerrilla bases around 20 kilometres north of the occupied zone, coming under intense fire from guerrillas of Hizbollah and Amal, as well as the Lebanese army.

Israel is now hoping that U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's visit to the Middle East next week will lead to the unconditional restart of peace talks with Syria which will in turn lead to an end of Israel's Lebanese nightmare.



King Hussein honours Lawzi

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein Saturday conferred upon former Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Lawzi the Al Nahda Medal in appreciation of his services to the country and the people of Jordan. Senator Lawzi recently resigned from his position as speaker of the Senate which he had held since 1984. Prior to his appointment as speaker, Sen. Lawzi has served as prime minister and chief of the Royal Court. Attending the ceremony was Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali (Petra photo)

King Hussein leaves for Cairo today

(Continued from page 1)

process, scrambled since hard-liner Netanyahu was elected prime minister, last May.

Mr. Mubarak visited Jordan in July, while His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan held talks with the Egyptian president in Cairo in early August, after the Crown Prince went

to west Jerusalem in an attempt to ease the closure imposed on Palestinian self-rule areas after a bombing in late July.

Reuters adds: In Washington, PNA negotiator Saeb Erekat pledged a policy of "zero tolerance" of "terrorism" but virtually ruled out the mass arrests of militants that Israel has demanded.

The armed wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, claimed responsibility for Thursday's

attack. U.S. State Department spokesman James Foley said Washington did not believe present Palestinian efforts were sufficient. He said Ms. Albright had made clear that she was looking for "actions on the part of the Palestinian authority that we haven't seen."

Ms. Albright will also have to contend with escalating violence in southern Lebanon, the last active Arab-Israeli front.

India declares mourning for Mother Theresa

(Continued from page 1)

developing the organisation worldwide. Shahi Imam Ahmad Bukhari, head of Delhi's Jamma Masjid, the largest mosque in the country, said: "The loss is so great that it cannot be bridged soon."

"She is now no more in

the world but she will remain immortal ... she was a leading saint."

On the streets, however, the mood was sombre rather than spontaneous, particularly after the Missionaries of Charity postponed the public viewing of the body for fear of chaos in the narrow alley leading to Mother

House.

A nun said the embalmed body would be taken to the more accessible Saint Thomas' Church in central Calcutta later Saturday, adding: "We can't manage the crowds here."

Tess Joseph, a Christian teenager, said: "She was a wonderful person who has

touched everybody's lives. I met her only once. You felt better just looking at her."

Sufia Razi, a Muslim schoolteacher, added: "We have lost our mother. She was a mother to the whole world. I have been waiting since 6:00 a.m. to get a glimpse of Mother's body. It's sad that we have not

been allowed through."

Around 1,000 mourners, many weeping, earlier Saturday filed past Mother Teresa's body and kissed her feet. Mother Teresa's sudden death, put down to "acute left ventricular failure" at 9:30 p.m. Friday, surprised many.

Millions attend Diana's funeral

(Continued from page 1)

"several million." Calm crowds posed no problem to police.

Thousands more streamed toward roadblocks from London to Althorp, the ancestral Spencer estate, site of Princess Diana's burial site on a small island in a family lake. Her cortege, a hearse replacing the horse-drawn gun carriage that took her to the Abbey, started the 95-kilometre trip north immediately after services ended.

Spectators tossed flowers toward it as it passed. By the time it entered the freeway, the blooms were so heavy the cortege stopped to clear them away.

The outpouring surprised few.

"That girl, she won the hearts of everybody, even non-royalists like me," said John Holmes, a London window cleaner watching with his 10-year-old daughter.

Many people seemed at a loss for eloquence, though, with words flowing far less freely than they did earlier in the week.

To shrieks of grief and then to mournful silence, Diana's casket inched through streets lined with spectators. As the cortege emerged from the sun-dappled gates of Kensington Palace, the Princess of Wales' home in life, distraught onlookers sobbed and threw flowers, waved and reached with extended arms to snap pictures. Several wept loudly.

"We love you, Diana," another woman shrieked. But quickly there was quiet. Some spectators hurried along behind the barriers to follow the cortege as far as they could.

It passed the London landmarks with which the princess was so familiar:

Rotten Row, where she learned to ride, and — just out of sight — the stores of Knightsbridge. Just yards away was Harrods, the Fayed's department store. Princes Philip and Charles, and Princess Diana's sons, Princes William and Harry, walking five abreast behind the coffin with Diana's brother, joined the procession as it entered the mall near Buckingham Palace.

Following them were representatives of Diana's favourite charities, 500 strong, turning the cortege into a somber parade of causes the princess held dear. At roadside, people wiped away tears. And still there was silence, broken only by the horses' steps.

Westminster Abbey's tenor bell tolled once each minute as Princess Diana's coffin approached. Royals, government leaders and Princess Diana's friends and family streamed in, as did celebrities she befriended — including Luciano Pavarotti, George Michael and a pallid Elton John, who sang a forceful, updated version of his hit song Candle in the Wind in honour of "England's Rose." Outside, spectators sang along.

Mohammad Fayed, father of Princess Diana's boyfriend Dodi Fayed, who died with her in the Paris car crash, strode slowly towards his Abbey seat, his head down.

As Queen Elizabeth II left Buckingham Palace for the Abbey, the red-and-gold royal standard was lowered from the flagpole, replaced by a Union Jack at half-staff — a historical first, ordered by the monarch as a mark of respect.

"It is such a shame that we could not have done this for her in life so she could have known how we felt," said Steve Dale, who camped out to watch.

Ship found buried under museum

ROSKILDE, Denmark (AFP) — Danish archaeologists have discovered the world's longest Viking ship, buried underneath one of their own Viking Museums. The boat, some 36 metres in length, was discovered earlier this year with seven other boats (one Viking and six dating from the start of the Middle Ages) "during work to expand the Roskilde Viking Museum," said the director of the National Museum, Hanne-Marie Myrheoj.

Stern sends sponsors packing

MONTREAL (AFP) — It took U.S. radio shock jock Howard Stern less than a week to send sponsors running from a Quebec station that broadcast his insults against French-speaking Canadians. Six companies, including the Bell Telephone Company, cancelled their advertising contracts with English-language CHOM Radio in Montreal after Stern called French-speakers "scumbags," the first time ever his show was broadcast on a Canadian station.

Spanish king's future-in-law hurries to pay tickets

BARCELONA, Spain (AFP) — The future son-in-law of Spain's King Juan Carlos has hurried to pay off parking fines and taxes before his wedding next month, press reports said. Spanish handball star Inaki Urdangarin, future husband of the Infanta Cristina, was admonished by a Barcelona Residents' Association after piling up around \$2,200 since 1993 in unpaid parking fines and residence taxes.

Larry King marries for 7th time

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Larry King, the popular CNN host, got married Friday for the seventh time in Los Angeles just a day ahead of a planned heart operation in New York, a spokesman said. The 63-year-old King wed Shawn Southwick, 37, a Los Angeles businesswoman married twice before. Following his recovery from angioplasty, the couple are to hold a wedding reception in October. King, who hosts the daily Larry King Live on CNN, had a heart attack in 1987 and afterward underwent bypass surgery.

No adoption for gay couples

THE HAGUE (AFP) — Two gay women who wanted to adopt each others' children, born by artificial insemination, had their legal petition rejected by the Dutch Supreme Court. The women, named in court as Van Ijzendoorn and Louman, vowed to fight on said that they will petition the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. "Our children are the victims in this affair," they said following the decision. "In everyday life, they are brother and sister, but society does not grant them any rights which go with this."

Rolling Stones drop in at Toronto tavern

TORONTO (AFP) — The Rolling Stones took time out from their rehearsals here for an upcoming world tour by dropping in at a local tavern and giving an hour-long free performance. The Toronto Star reported Friday. Rumours were rife Thursday the Stones, who kick off their tour in Chicago Sept. 23, would play a gig at the Horseshoe Tavern in Toronto's trendy Queen Street West district, and fans lined up for hours before the Stones arrived, the daily reported.

49 massacred in Algeria

(Continued from page 1)

The attackers "arrived on board a truck, pretending they were members of the security forces," said one witness who escaped the carnage.

"They then attacked the people who were in the square. A baby was decapitated and as its mother fled, her breast was slashed with a sword," the witness said. The Beni Messous Hospi-

tal Saturday was the scene of almost unbearable grief as relatives of victims collapsed in tears as they left the building, stricken by the sight of mutilated family members whom doctors were desperately trying to save.

Taxi drivers were refusing Saturday to drive visitors to the scene of the massacre, saying it was too dangerous.



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